DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 445 310 CG 030 377

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TITLE	Protective Schools: Linking Drug Abuse Prevention with Student Success. A Guide for Educators, Policy Makers, and Families.
INSTITUTION	Arizona Univ., Tucson. Coll. of Education.
PUB DATE	2000-00-00
NOTE	135p.
AVAILABLE FROM	This document is available on the World Wide Web at http://www.drugstats.org.
PUB TYPE	Guides - Non-Classroom (055)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC06 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	At Risk Persons; Cooperation; Educational Change; Elementary Secondary Education; *Health Education; Illegal Drug Use; *Improvement Programs; Integrated Services; Pregnant Students; *Prevention; *Resilience (Personality); Student Empowerment; Success

ABSTRACT

This guide is written from the perspective of school-based efforts to help address social problems and drug use among children. Although schools are not solely responsible for the nation's drug problems, the solution will require collaborative efforts among schools, families, communities, and social institutions. No longer are schools just a setting to deliver prevention; they have the potential to act as powerful protective influences in students' lives. This is the concept behind a protective school. The physical and psychological atmosphere serves to promote healthy youth development in protective schools. The ten principles that foster a creation of such a school are outlined in this guide, and can be applied by educators, school administrators, policy makers, community leaders, and parents. The principles are: (1) forging a vision of success; (2) building a protective school culture; (3) increasing leadership commitment; (4) supporting a strong academic program; (5) implementing research-based prevention; (6) providing a continuum of services; (7) providing professional development; (8) strengthening home-school-community relationships; (9) leveraging funding and resources; and (10) using data to guide decision making. Additional resources are listed throughout the guide. (Contains 55 references.) (JDM)

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Protective Schools

Linking Drug Abuse Prevention with Student Success

A guide for educators, policy makers, and families

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Protective Schools

Linking Drug Abuse Prevention with Student Success

Kris Bosworth, Ph.D.

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people look at drug prevention as just one more thing to do, but kids cannot be successful in school if they are high on drugs. I see drug use as the number-one cause of absences, tardies, and academic underachievement in schools

Judy Bowers, a Vice President, American School Counselors Association

Introduction

Schools are increasingly facing public pressure to spread precious resources thinner and thinner. Given the competing pressures for scarce resources, what are the payoffs of substance abuse prevention? Consider this:

Every year one can delay the onset of alcohol use in a teenager reduces by 15% the chance that this teen will develop substance abuse problems.

The rate at which teenagers initiate smoking increased every year between 1988 and 1996. If prevention efforts had done no more than hold teenage smoking rates steady at 1988 levels, there would be 1.5 million fewer smokers in the United States today.

Students who use drugs are more likely to drop out of school, be victims or perpetrators of violence, and engage in risky sexual behavior.

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Although schools are not responsible for the nation's drug problem,[1] the solution will require collaborative efforts among schools, families, communities, and social institutions. Four powerful factors in preventing school failure, substance abuse, violence, and teen pregnancy can be influenced within the school setting. They are:

- a positive physical and psychological environment in the school;
- the presence of strong adult role models in a student's life;
- respectful and nurturing interactions between adults and students in the school; and
- a high level of student bonding to the school.

Everyday interactions and activities in a school may have at least as much effect as the best-designed prevention program on children's futures. No longer are schools just a setting to deliver prevention; they have potential to act as powerful protective influences in students' lives. This is the concept behind a **protective school**.

In a **protective school**, the physical and psychological atmosphere promotes healthy youth development:

- Assessment of students' strengths and assets guides their educational programs.
- Students have multiple opportunities to experience success and be recognized for competence and prosocial actions.
- Academic expectations are high, and students are encouraged to do their best work.
- Administrators creatively leverage resources to support innovations that benefit students.
- A culture of invitation encourages families and community members to become closely connected and to contribute to the school community.
- The school is a caring and supportive place to work and learn.
- The school community, with input from families, students, and community members, has developed a clear vision of common beliefs and goals.

The underlying assumptions of a protective school effort are threefold:

- Considerable overlap exists among the risk factors that predispose youth to substance abuse, violence, teen pregnancy, and school failure. The same is true for protective factors that buffer them against negative life outcomes.
- Effective interventions for substance abuse, violence, school failure, and teen pregnancy share many common features.
- Effective prevention strategies are consistent with best practice in education (for example, project-based learning, interactive teaching).

Risk and protective factors for substance abuse and other risk behaviors exist (1) within the community or social context (for example, laws and social norms regarding substance use), (2) within the family (family management practices, family drug use), (3) within the school (academic failure or success, bonding to school, peer acceptance or rejection), and (4) within the individual and peer group (including such factors as temperament and membership in a peer group that uses drugs).

1 Throughout the text *drugs* is used to refer to alcohol and tobacco, as well as illicit drugs.

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Educators may not be able to influence the social context in a child's family or peer group. However, in a protective school they have tremendous power to influence whether students:

- set goals for their future;
- feel academically successful and socially accepted; and
- locate caring and supportive adult role models.

Educators can take specific steps within the school setting, but creating a protective environment for students is a community responsibility. Family and community members also have roles in supporting healthy youth development. **This brochure is written from the perspective of school-based efforts, but this in no way implies that schools bear the sole responsibility for addressing drug use and other social problems in youth.**

In these pages are outlined ten principles that foster a protective school. They are listed in an order that might match a school's priorities for implementation, but this does not reflect on their relative importance. The information will be of interest to educators, school administrators, policy makers, community leaders, business leaders, parent groups, and researchers seeking:

- to conceptualize an environmental approach to prevention;
- to make prevention a seamless part of what all members of a school community do every day;
- to identify the strengths of individual schools and target areas for future growth;
- to formulate goals for linking prevention with the academic mandate of the school system; and
- to integrate concepts they may have read about in different places at different times into a comprehensive vision of prevention.

The protective schools approach has the advantage of overcoming several challenges that school personnel have faced:

The "**trade-off" dilemma**—the concern that prevention activities will divert time and energy away from academics. In fact, a school community that promotes many and varied learning opportunities and sets high expectations for success creates a strong protective environment for students. One of the principles of a protective school is identifying and strengthening the positive things school staff already are doing.

The "**bandwagon" dilemma**—the prevalence of fads in education that leave educators constantly shifting strategies and procedures in response to changes in public policy. Most of the strategies in this report will enhance the effectiveness of any prevention curriculum. They can remain in place to provide stability through between-curriculum transitions or shifts in the core issues the school is addressing.

The "**what you see is not always what you get" dilemma**—the reality that schools are inundated with competing proposals for programs. They have to filter those proposals and make choices about the school's direction, usually without succinct and easy-to-understand information that would enable them to choose truly needed and effective programs or innovations.

Combining the best in education with the best in prevention can help children avoid substance abuse and related social problems while overcoming barriers that prevent them from achieving their potential. Every child deserves the best possible chance at making it in life, despite whatever challenges he or she faces outside the school doors.

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- ☐ The school has a vision of success with broad support in the school and community.
- ☐ A healthy school culture promotes student bonding to school.
- ☐ School leaders are engaged and committed to prevention.
- ☐ A strong academic program promotes success for students of all ability levels.
- ☐ An effective prevention curriculum or program is faithfully implemented with all students.
- ☐ An integrated continuum of strategies serves students and families with multiple levels of need.
- ☐ Ongoing professional development supports effective and empowered faculty and staff.
- ☐ The school has strong and mutually supportive relationships with families, neighbors, and community leaders.
- ☐ Funding and resources are leveraged to support prevention and educational reform.
- ☐ Regular collection and analysis of data about the school guides decision making.

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a vision with broad community support provides an anchor for change

Forge a Vision of Success

is a commonly held belief system that:

provides a framework within which to evaluate new ideas or programs and determine which to implement, revise, or reject;

provides a general consensus about ways to respond to the challenges facing youth and the role of the school community in promoting student success and healthy development;

is often reflected in mission statements;

is clear, coherent, simply stated, and positive in outlook;

is widely communicated so that participants throughout the school and community understand the vision and recognize how their actions contribute to bringing it about;

helps unite people to move in the same general direction; and

is an anchor for change that buffers the school against conflicting pressures from public opinion and political changes.

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Roles and Responsibilities

CONCERNED PARTIES, including parents, students, faculty, staff, and community members, begin by honestly examining their assumptions about schools and students. They contribute to drafting a vision for the future of the school. This ensures widespread community support for actions taken to implement the vision.

PRINCIPALS examine and articulate their own personal vision and share it widely in the school. They initiate the process of forging a community vision and provide leadership throughout the process.

Rewards!

A vision of the future is the anchor for change. It ensures that efforts toward change are collaborative rather than becoming power struggles where various parties argue over what needs to change and how.

When school leaders enlist the support of people who will be affected by a change, change occurs more rapidly and causes less emotional upheaval.

By seeking parent and student input into new policies and procedures, school officials demonstrate their responsiveness to the needs of those they serve.

A shared vision enlarges the base of support for a school and enables school leaders to leverage a variety of resources to underwrite activities that are not directly supported by state funds.

Reaching Success

Forging a common vision is no simple matter. It requires:

- ☐ effort to elicit the participation of a broad spectrum of families, students, and community members, some of whom may have had negative educational experiences themselves and want to avoid the educational system;
- ☐ patience to build consensus;
- ☐ tactful negotiation to ensure that the result contains elements of all the voices that make up the community;
- ☐ sensitivity to incorporate and respond to the concerns of minority or disenfranchised groups whose voices and concerns may be muted by the majority opinion;
- ☐ a planned dissemination strategy carefully designed to gain support of stakeholders; and
- ☐ a commitment to revisit the vision periodically, to make sure the initial vision was on track and to refine it over time.

Signs that a school has been successful in forging a vision include:

- ☐ statements of the vision are widely displayed in the school and school-published materials;
- ☐ all members of the school community can describe the vision and how they are contributing to it; and
- ☐ key elements of the vision are reflected in the school's action plan.

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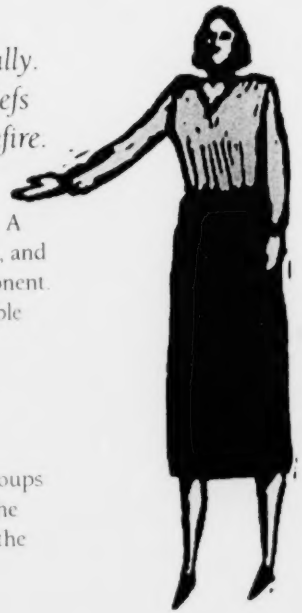
Tools

Formulating a vision, achieving consensus, and sharing it with stakeholders are steps that must be taken carefully. Any simple statement may sound superficial and probably will not convey the full meaning or underlying beliefs of the vision. If stakeholders perceive that school leaders are imposing a vision on them, the effort may backfire. Here is how one principal approached the vision process:[1]



The principal appointed a "think tank" of 16 hand-picked faculty members and two prominent community leaders whose organizations were located within the school's catchment area. The group met regularly, distributed and read materials on school improvement, and discussed what could be done to improve that school.

At the end of the year, a week-long retreat was held off-site. Additional community leaders and parent leaders were added to the group. Numerous brainstorming sessions were held to (1) establish a mission statement and shared vision for the school and (2) formulate strategies for involving the rest of the faculty and parents in the vision.

A comprehensive strategy was planned and implemented to spread the vision through meetings, networking, and small-group discussions.

Individual components of the school vision were identified. A task force comprised of faculty, community leaders, parents, and student representatives was formed to focus on each component. An administrator served on each task force, but was not eligible to be elected chairperson.

Monthly, the group chairs met to present their task force's recommendations to the principal. Recommendations that achieved consensus in this group were implemented.

This process of beginning discussion of the vision in small groups and gradually expanding the stakeholders involved allowed the vision to be explored in depth and consensus reached about the changes necessary to support it.

Problem: Economic disparities among students are a common source of conflict.

Action: Several schools had a vision of promoting a sense of equality among students and eliminating economically based discrimination. Therefore, students and parents requested school uniforms.

Result: The uniform policy was readily implemented and created a significantly more positive school environment because it reinforced the school vision of equality.

Follow-up: Seeing the success of uniform policies in these schools, the state legislature mandated that large inner-city schools must implement uniform policies. When a uniform policy was imposed from outside rather than arising from a collective internal vision, the policy was widely resisted. Therefore, it failed to bring about the expected positive changes.

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Carlson, R. V. (1996). *Reframing and reform: Perspectives on organizational leadership and social change.* White Plains, NY: Longman.

Clark, S. N., & Clark, D. C. (1994). *Restructuring the middle level school: Implications for school leaders.* Albany: State University of New York Press.

1. Adapted from Short, P. M., & J. T. Greer. (1997). *Leadership in empowered schools: Themes from innovative efforts.* Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill.

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Suggestions for Forging a Vision of Success

Place a "✓" by the items already being implemented.
Place a "⁘" by three or four items you would like to improve or strengthen.

What school personnel can do

____ Encourage school personnel to examine and articulate their own personal visions of a protective school. Build on these to begin establishing a common vision for the direction of the school.

____ Provide forums at which policy makers, business people, teachers, students, parents, administrators, researchers, and community members can express their visions of a protective school.

____ Look for areas of overlap among the visions of all the participants. Use the commonalties to build a common vision statement, priorities and goals.

____ Actively communicate the vision to all stakeholders in the school and encourage their input. Solicit their participation in putting it into action.

____ Schedule opportunities to repeat the visioning process regularly, so the vision can evolve over time.

____ Examine how current policies and resource allocations do or do not support the schoolwide vision of youth and school success.

____ Carefully examine how existing policies and procedures may result in inadvertent discrimination on the basis of race, ethnic background, economic status, sexual orientation, etc., to identify groups that might be silenced in the current process.

____ Provide leadership training for students and other disenfranchised groups to increase their comfort with participation.

What families and community members can do

____ Build on the schools' lead to create a compatible community-wide vision for youth success.

____ Give support and publicity to schools that actively work to promote academic success and healthy development.

____ Participate in school events and school-community councils.

____ Organize and host cooperative school-community forums. Such forums build consensus and support for educational innovations and school-based prevention.

____ Support school staff members and administrators who are active in involving family members, students, and community members by:

- featuring their accomplishments at state and local conferences;
- recognizing their efforts in community forums;
- nominating them for local civic awards; and
- inviting them to speak at events, service clubs, training sessions, etc.

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bonding to school is a major protective factor

Build a Protective School Culture

refers to the overall physical and psychological atmosphere in a school: the behaviors, attitudes, and beliefs that have worked well in the past and are taught to new members of the community. In a protective school culture, adults and students practice prosocial behaviors so students bond to their school. Culture operates at three levels:

1. **Artifacts**—visible organizational structures and materials (such as drug-free school posters, parent volunteer system, displays of student work, student handbooks);
2. **Expressed values**—explicitly written or stated beliefs and policies, such as vision, mission statements, and personnel policies; and
3. **Underlying assumptions**—unspoken attitudes and beliefs about "the way things are in this school."

Culture is the most pervasive influence in a school, and even seemingly minor steps to create a positive culture can have profound effects on students' lives. Yet, it is frequently overlooked or taken for granted. A protective culture is accepting and inclusive, with opportunities for all members to learn.

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Roles and Responsibilities

STUDENTS have responsibilities in contributing to the school, to build their pride in and connection to the school.

Students need developmentally appropriate opportunities to assume positive roles, make use of their assets, and receive praise for competence and positive actions if they are to become responsible, self-confident adults. (Examples might be assisting adults, completing service learning projects, being tour guides, picking up schoolyard or neighborhood trash.)

Positive behaviors and compliance with rules are increased when students have input in establishing rules and expectations.

ALL STAFF MEMBERS are role models of positive behavior. They also have the responsibility to reach out to antisocial, rejected, or apparently troubled students by creating opportunities for these students to increase their participation in the culture and activities of the school.

TEACHERS reinforce the values of the school culture by incorporating those messages in their classroom instruction.

PRINCIPALS establish ways of doing things in the school that maintain and support a positive, protective culture.

Reaching Success

In a protective school culture, school personnel create policies and expectations that:

- ☐ are based on student, family, and neighborhood strengths and assets;
- ☐ promote students' positive cognitive, emotional, physical, and social development;
- ☐ minimize barriers to learning and teaching;
- ☐ increase bonding with school through empathy, mutual respect, and extensive social supports;
- ☐ create opportunities for all members of the school community to assume positive roles, share responsibility and decision making, and innovate;
- ☐ turn mistakes into learning opportunities rather than failures meriting punishment;
- ☐ have mechanisms to acknowledge and honor accomplishments and all types of psychosocial competencies (such as helpfulness, good citizenship, most improved performance, volunteerism, participation in decision making, and cessation of negative behavior);
- ☐ reinforce explicit expectations for positive behavior and academic success;
- ☐ establish regular rituals to reinforce positive norms (for example, one school has a kindness pledge that is recited daily);
- ☐ help students develop the skills and supports they need to resist pressures to engage in behaviors that place them at risk for negative life outcomes;
- ☐ feature widespread modeling of healthy behaviors by both students and adults; and
- ☐ facilitate the early identification of students with problems or antisocial behavior, because they stand out from the norm.

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Tools

Teachers and students can use strategies such as the following to reinforce a positive culture in the classroom:[1]

Help children get to know each other's (and your) strengths through activities in which they share or write about meaningful items or experiences from home.

Base curriculum and lessons on students' strengths and assets.

Involve students in planning, problem solving, identifying issues, assessing progress, etc. (for example, through periodic class meetings).

Promote cooperation over competition. Post everyone's best work, instead of acknowledging only the most advanced students. Rather than motivating through competition, offer opportunities for the class to work together to help everyone achieve a minimum standard and earn a reward.

Systematically build relationships with students (for example, by eating lunch with them periodically, celebrating their successes, sending positive notes home).

Interject personal anecdotes or experiences to make instruction more interesting and meaningful.

Use the first person plural (we, us, let's, etc.) when presenting classroom activities.

Convey attentiveness to students and excitement about learning through nonverbal gestures, getting down on the child's level, and use of dramatic inflection.

Begin each year by discussing what kind of class everyone wants to have and setting norms and goals accordingly.

Select materials, examples, or activities that reflect students' age, ethnicity, culture, and community.

Involve all students in chores and responsibilities in the classroom.

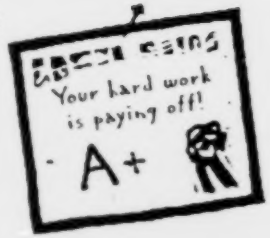
Integrate concepts of discipline and respect for classmates throughout instruction; use disruptions or behavioral problems as opportunities for mini-lessons on respect and self-responsibility.

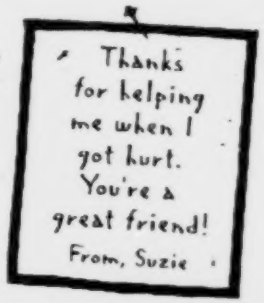
Provide meaningful praise rather than praise that sounds automatic or generic.

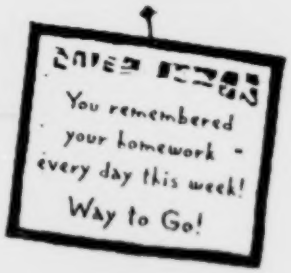
After redirecting a student, give that student an opportunity to receive praise for doing something right.

To increase enthusiasm for learning, give students more say in what they will learn.

Involve students in developing the criteria by which their work will be assessed, and provide guidelines so they clearly understand what's expected of them.







Praise and support each other.

Encourage and help each other answer questions or complete tasks.

Advise each other about classroom social behavior and assist in resolving conflicts.

Help newcomers and classroom visitors become part of the group.

Participate in daily or weekly ritual activities that reinforce the positive group norms set for the classroom (for example, a sharing circle or class meeting).

Relate anecdotes and use humor when relevant to the task at hand.

1. Adapted from Cabello, B., & Terrell, R. (1994). Making students feel like family: How teachers create warm and caring classroom climates. *Journal of Classroom Instruction, 29*(1), 17-23; Schaps, E., Lewis, C., & Watson, M. (1996). Building community in school. *Principal, 76*(2), 29-31; and Good things happen when educators listen. (Winter 1998). *The Link* (AEL newsletter), *17*(4), 1.

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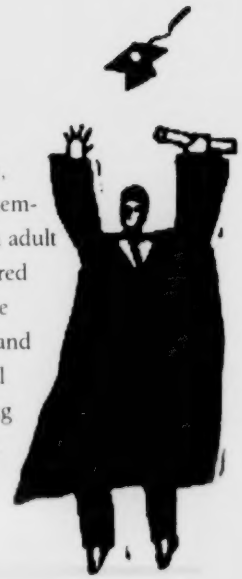

Problem: A middle-school student who had emigrated from Vietnam during the elementary grades repeatedly got into fights, failed to complete assignments, and was widely disliked by teachers and his peers.

Action: After a series of such problems, the student self-referred to the school's teen court, as an alternative to traditional disciplinary action by school administrators. The student jurors were shocked to realize that, although the student's English appeared fluent in everyday conversation, he had difficulty understanding the court proceedings and rarely understood his schoolwork or homework. They "sentenced" him to receive regular tutoring from an adult Vietnamese-American mentor.

Result: The adult mentor helped not only with schoolwork, but with clearing up cultural misunderstandings. He helped the student negotiate cultural differences that had hindered his fitting in at school. He explained to teachers that Asian-born students would be unlikely to ask for help, bring up difficulties, or defend themselves when falsely accused by an adult because such behavior is considered highly disrespectful in their native cultures. After a year of tutoring and mentoring, this student passed all his classes and received a standing ovation from the student body at graduation.

Rewards!

One of the most significant factors influencing students' choices to use or avoid mood-altering substances is their perception of what others do and believe. If the school norm is "people in this school choose not to use drugs and do not think drugs are cool," then the personal choices of most students will reflect this norm.

A negative, threatening environment low in reinforcement for positive behavior causes students to feel alienated and negative. They are then more susceptible to the mood-enhancing qualities of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs.

Involving students in decision making builds a strong school community in which students feel a sense of belonging and participation. This helps diminish the deviant or negative subculture that surrounds and reinforces substance use.

Positive changes in the school culture can ripple out to the wider contexts of district, neighborhood, and family cultures.

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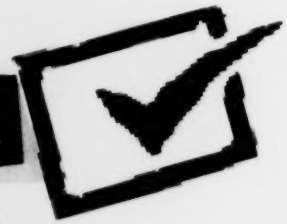
Suggestions for Building a Protective School Culture



Place a "✓" by the items already accomplished.
Place a "+" by three or four items you would like to improve or strengthen.

_____ Regularly and consistently acknowledge adults and students at school for engaging in altruistic and cooperative behaviors.

_____ Brainstorm with students, faculty/staff, and parents simple changes that could make the school a more pleasant place to be.

_____ Establish and support a school norm that does not tolerate insults, teasing, or any other forms of verbal and nonverbal bullying by adults or students.

_____ Support all members of the school community in learning and using skills for nonviolent resolution of conflicts, owning responsibility for personal behavior, showing empathy for others, and making healthy choices.

_____ Clearly express the school's position about nonuse of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs. Discourage both students and staff from wearing or using items that promote alcohol or tobacco companies. (The same is true for sex, violence, etc.)

_____ Model incentives and rewards after successful practices in industry to increase a school's capacity for rapid change.

_____ Reward, support, and celebrate faculty and staff for accomplishments and innovation.

_____ Assign "buddies" to students who transfer into the school, to help them make the transition into the school culture.

Discipline and Student Interactions

_____ Establish and enforce a "good school citizen" code of conduct that applies to all adults and students within the school.

_____ Phrase rules positively to tell students what to do instead of what not to do (such as, "Walk in the hallways" instead of "No running in the hallways").

_____ Convey an expectation that all students can and will be successful.

_____ Focus on giving students concrete rewards and acknowledgment for complying with the rules of conduct, rather than focusing primarily on misbehavior.

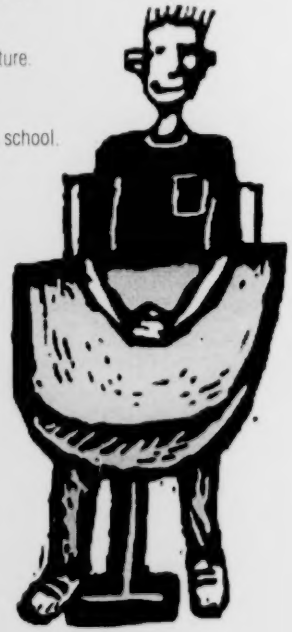
Building Family and Community Relationships

_____ Promote positive interactions between home and school (for example, contact the parent when a student does something well, particularly for students who are frequently in trouble).

_____ Encourage family participation in the culture of the school; enlist parents to get other parents involved.

_____ Examine how parents and community members are involved in your school and whether there are appropriate ways to increase that involvement.

_____ Celebrate diversity! Include cultural sensitivity as an essential component of staff training.



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_____ Encourage people in the community to volunteer and participate at their local schools.

_____ Organize community events held at local schools and promote displays of students' best work on those occasions.

_____ Be a model of respectful, cooperative, positive behavior in your everyday interactions.

_____ Participate in school events and school-community task forces or councils.

_____ Give support and publicity to schools that actively work to develop a positive culture.

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the principal's support is a prerequisite for implementation of successful prevention and educational reform

Increase Leadership Commitment

The principal *shapes, enhances, and maintains the tone, culture, and vision of a school, determines priorities, and ensures that school policies conform with state and federal guidelines. In a protective school, leadership is shared and exists at many levels. This transactional leadership style promotes a positive culture of empowerment and respect. Through shared decision making, the principal gains more power because more people are involved in an effort to move in the same direction.*

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Roles and Responsibilities

STUDENTS have leadership in making choices about what and how they will learn.

TEACHERS have leadership in making choices about how they will perform their jobs; for example, curriculum, discipline, instructional techniques.

PRINCIPALS serve as the school's conscience, main resource finder, innovative thinker, and student advocate. They carefully design leadership structures that will serve their school well in the future, even after their tenure.

SUPERINTENDENTS have leadership in building relationships of trust with schools in their district. By supporting appropriate levels of site-based management, they enable schools to be innovative and experiment. They actively promote prevention and educational reform activities in their district.

SCHOOL BOARDS have leadership in re-evaluating restrictive policies that force teachers and schools into a common mold of programs, textbooks, and instruction and prevent them from seeking creative ways to meet the needs of each individual student body and community. They actively promote prevention and educational reform activities in their district.

STATE AND FEDERAL POLITICIANS propose and support legislation that allocates state and federal resources for prevention and provides support for education.

Reaching Success

School leaders do the following:

- ☐ Begin visibly, enthusiastically, and persistently participating in innovations the school community agrees to adopt, especially ideas that come from faculty or staff. For an innovation to be successful it must be fully supported by the institution's leadership, to demonstrate that it is not a fad that will go away.
- ☐ Work to identify problems and plant the seeds of change, but empower the staff closest to the problem to identify and propose solutions.
- ☐ Work "in the trenches" along with everyone else, rather than allowing their status to interfere with building relationships with staff.
- ☐ Examine the model on which the school operates. Ensure that it provides opportunities for individuals to develop and mature as independent learners. Encourage all school personnel to create opportunities for competence to be developed and displayed.
- ☐ Adopt an organizational philosophy of participant decision making at all levels (that is, teachers empower students to make age-appropriate decisions; the principal empowers staff to make decisions regarding their work responsibilities; within state requirements, superintendents empower principals to make decisions regarding the operation of their school; school boards relax regulations and oversight to enable participant decision making at all levels).
- ☑ Minimize one-way communication through memos and announcements and replace with communication avenues that flow in all directions and are free of distortion.
- ☑ Formulate clear and common goals, and gain the support of all members of the school community.
- ☑ Examine ways to make the most effective possible use of human resources.
- ☑ Ensure that innovations are fully implemented before judging their effectiveness. The first criterion for judging success of an innovation is its degree of dissemination.

Rewards!

Excellent management and leadership skills are vital to the effective functioning of a school, its overall culture, and the optimal health of its employees. It removes the barriers to learning that increase students' risk of negative outcomes.

Leaders provide support for a continuum of services, implementation of effective prevention curricula and programs, staff development, and ongoing data collection.

Leaders are role models for positive norms, healthy behavior, and problem solving.

Changes featuring participant involvement are most likely to succeed. Changes planned outside the school or by the principal alone are often perceived as an intrusion and imposition.

By demonstrating trustworthiness in his or her personal behavior and placing trust in others, the principal conditions the level of trust that can occur in the school setting. An environment of trust is the key to creating empowered and effective employees at all levels.

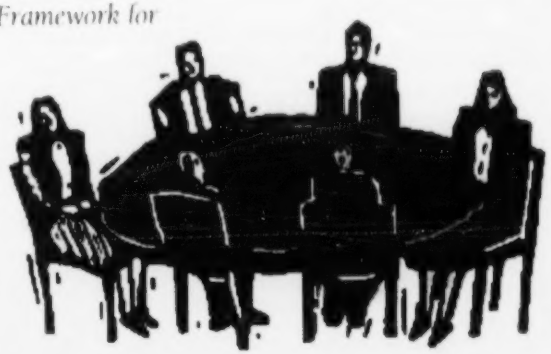
Empowered staff model self-empowerment to students, increasing their resiliency.

Tools

An assistant superintendent began seeking a new approach when she was assigned the division in the district that had the lowest morale and greatest number of union grievances. To begin focusing on change, she asked all members of the division to answer these five questions, adapted from Oakley and Krug's "Framework for Continuous Renewal":[1]

What is already working?
What makes it work?
What are our objectives?
What are the benefits of achieving these objectives?
What can we do to move closer to our objectives?

Focusing on the division's strengths and goals led to changes that improved both morale and productivity.



1. Oakley, E., & Krug, D. (1991). *Enlightened leadership: Getting to the heart of change.* New York: Simon & Schuster.

Problem: The principal in an elementary school had a vision of improving school climate, enhancing student resiliency, and implementing the most current teaching practices in her school. Limited funds and time prevented widespread formal staff training in these issues.

Action: The principal reviewed several current books on these topics and created a reading list. She organized a voluntary book group in which she participated. The group read one chapter a week, then met to discuss the content and its application to their school. Group membership changed as staff participated when the books that interested them most were under discussion or when time permitted.

Result: The principal clearly communicated her vision for change and commitment to positive youth development. She built staff and faculty support for change and created an informal and enjoyable forum for discussion of issues affecting the school.

Carlson, R. V. (1996). *Reframing and reform: Perspectives on organizational leadership and social change.* White Plains, NY: Longman.

Murphy, J., & Louis, K. S. (1994). *Reshaping the principalship: Insights from transformational reform efforts.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Schaps, E., & Lewis, C. C. (1998). Risks and rewards of community building. *Educational Leadership, 28,* 6-9.

Short, P. M., & J. T. Greer. (1997). *Leadership in empowered schools: Themes from innovative efforts.* Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill.

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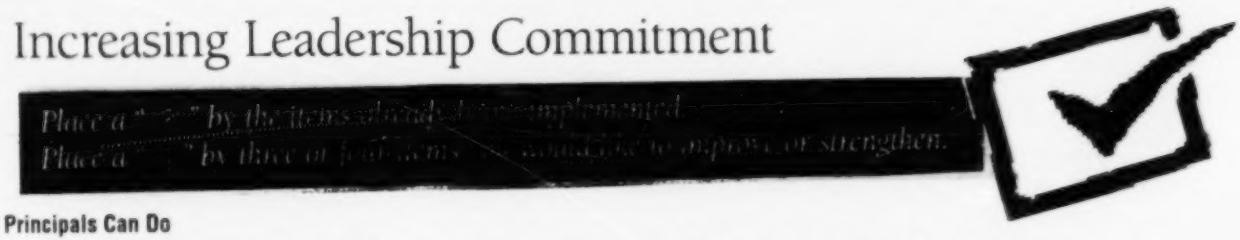
Suggestions for Increasing Leadership Commitment



What Principals Can Do

_____ Talk about your commitment and vision with staff, faculty, students, parents, and community members. Acknowledge people whose actions move the school toward your vision.

_____ Seek staff input about what is and is not working and where changes are needed. Implement suggestions that have broad-based support. Relate new policies and procedures to significant faculty/staff concerns.

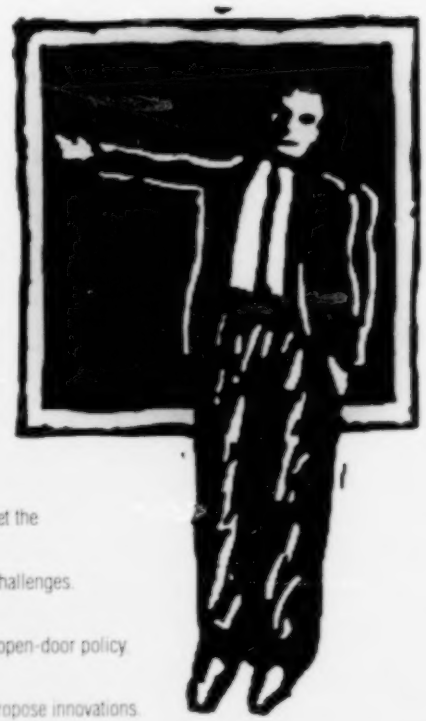
_____ Focus on the strengths in your staff. Systematically praise and provide incentives for personnel to increase those behaviors.

_____ Stay current about research-based strategies to promote academic success and healthy development. Seek training in areas of weakness.

_____ Actively honor the past by analyzing the policies and procedures already in place and identifying those that are effective and consistent with your vision. Retain those practices and use them to create a bridge between the old and the new.

_____ Assign specific responsibilities for program supervision and monitoring, so that programs are not left to "run themselves."

_____ Establish advisory committees, councils, etc., for discussion and recommendation of schoolwide policies. Involve student councils in age-appropriate contributions to decision making.



How Staff and Administrators Can Collaborate

_____ Collaboratively generate and clearly define your vision, objectives, roles and responsibilities, and time lines in a written plan. Ensure that everyone in the school community has a clear role to play in contributing to a protective school culture.

_____ Work with all school adults, from the principal on down, to add written items to their job descriptions that specify their contribution to a protective environment. Review staff and faculty on those items during performance reviews.

_____ Provide all school personnel with specific training and staff development opportunities to enable them to meet the written expectations.

_____ Schedule ten minutes in every faculty and staff meeting to celebrate successes and brainstorm solutions to challenges. Target persistent challenges for staff training.

_____ Increase day-to-day interactions between school leaders and faculty, staff, and students. Be visible. Have an open-door policy. Schedule opportunities for dialogue.

_____ Create mechanisms for team decision making and solution seeking so that faculty and staff are encouraged to propose innovations.

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How to Draw Itinerant Personnel into the School Culture

_____ Confer with itinerant staff to educate yourself about what these various people do, could do, and ought to do.

_____ Familiarize itinerant staff with your school and its culture.

_____ Work together with itinerant personnel to establish priorities and determine how best to integrate those job roles into the culture of the school.

What District Administrators Can Do

_____ Make a commitment to bring about schoolwide, district-wide, and community-wide visions of promoting students' healthy and successful development.

_____ Avoid a top-down management style that shuts out the input of parents, teachers, and students. Use collaborative assessment and planning techniques to identify and address student and school problems.

_____ Nominate effective school leaders to receive community awards and recognition.

_____ Include educators in community-based leadership training.

_____ Invite educators to take leadership roles in the community.

_____ Ask school leaders what you can do to support them.

_____ Identify local school leaders' needs for prevention information.

_____ Disseminate timely and practical information about prevention and educational innovations.

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a feeling of mastery and competence is a buffer against substance use

Support a Strong Academic Program

A strong academic program *is the heart of a protective school. The goal is not to turn all students into magna cum laude scholars, but to encourage each one to become excited about learning, explore their talents, set positive career and life goals, gain the self-confidence to persevere in reaching those goals, and participate actively as citizens in a democracy.*

A strong academic program has:

a rigorous academic curriculum based on teaching practices proven effective in controlled evaluation studies;

celebration, display, and high visibility of the processes and products of learning involving all students, not just the high achievers;

a strong emphasis on basic skills of reading, writing, and mathematics, as well as guided opportunities to practice and strengthen these skills through projects, experiments, research, and investigation;

integration of prevention concepts into academic content to reinforce concepts taught in the prevention curriculum (for example, materials from the Developmental Studies Center[1] utilize classic works of children's literature to facilitate discussion of prosocial values); and

well-organized classrooms that have frequent opportunities for student involvement; clear procedures for attendance, participation in class, and homework completion; and clear rules with appropriate consequences for their violation.

1 See "Tools" section for address and more information

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Roles and Responsibilities

STUDENTS actively participate in their learning as well as in establishing expectations for school and classroom conduct and consequences for infractions.

TEACHERS are knowledgeable about the content they teach, interactive and group instructional strategies, and classroom management strategies to maximize instruction time. They establish an orderly classroom environment with clear norms and consistent enforcement of expectations for conduct.

PRINCIPALS actively provide support, information, and management to support the curriculum, teaching, and learning based on effective curriculum and practices.

PARENTS are involved in students' learning at home and participate at the school.

COMMUNITY MEMBERS provide students with opportunities for meaningful learning through mentoring and school-to-work programs.

Reaching Success

- ☐ Set high standards and challenge students to meet them.
- ☐ Publicize and celebrate academic success on a variety of measures. In addition to high scores on standardized tests, such successes include involvement in after-school clubs, graduates' acceptance rate to post-secondary educational institutions, community service, and social competence.
- ☐ Balance formal testing with portfolio assessment and opportunities for students to display their best work.
- ☐ Praise students for working hard on assignments, not simply for getting good grades.
- ☐ Hold frequent formal celebrations (such as scholars' assemblies) to honor group and individual achievements.
- ☐ Balance teacher-centered didactic instruction (lecture) with opportunities for project-based learning, service learning, cooperative learning, and group work, so students actively participate in learning. Use a variety of teaching techniques to accommodate a range of learning styles and interests, allowing most students to succeed in the regular classroom.

Rewards!

Bonding to school and having positive goals for the future are major protective factors against substance use. Students who feel successful in school are less likely to have problems with drugs.

School failure by third grade is a strong predictor of adolescent substance use and other negative outcomes. Students who develop strong literacy skills early are well prepared to succeed when academic expectations are increased in middle school and high school.

Measuring success in a variety of ways—such as balancing formal testing with portfolio assessment, recognizing a variety of talents, and praising students for working hard, not simply getting good grades—helps students develop self-confidence and self-efficacy. They feel socially competent and able to solve problems, including making wise choices about substance use, sexual activity, and other life decisions.

When students are busy with productive activities, they are less likely to experiment with addictive substances out of boredom or a feeling that the future holds nothing positive for them.

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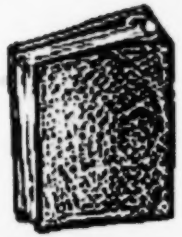
Tools

The following centers and organizations are useful resources for information about educational innovations best practices, and academic curricula:[2]



Accelerated Schools

Keri Marble

National Center for the Accelerated Schools Project

Stanford University, CERAS 109
Stanford, CA 94305-3084

Phone: (650) 725-1676

Web site: www.STANFORD.edu/group/ASP

The Accelerated Schools approach to school reform built around three principles of "unity of purpose," "empowerment coupled with responsibility," and "building on strengths." Its premise is that at-risk students should be accelerated and given the same type of high-expectations curriculum provided to gifted and talented students.

ATLAS Communities

Reggie Silberberg

Education Development Center

55 Chapel St.
Newton, MA 02458-1060

Phone: (617) 969-7100, ext. 2401
Toll-free: (800) 225-4276, ext. 2401
Fax: (617) 969-3440

E-mail: rsilberberg@edc.org
Web site: www.edc.org/FSC/ATLAS

ATLAS is a synthesis of four school reform organizations led by James Comer, Howard Gardner, Theodore Sizer, and Jane Whitla. A focus is creating feeder pathways from elementary to middle to high schools through providing students with coordinated and continuous experiences. Students become active participants in their own learning, with the teacher serving as coach.

Collaborative to Advance Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL)

Department of Psychology (M/C285)

University of Illinois at Chicago
1007 W. Harrison St.
Chicago, IL 60607-7137

Phone: (312) 413-1008
Fax: (312) 355-0559

Web site: www.casel.org

CASEL fosters the exchange of ideas and practices that promote the creation of safe, caring, and challenging learning environments. Members have published several books and articles, which are listed on the Web site along with suggested resources for social and emotional learning.

Co-NECT Schools

Heather Corbitt

10 Fawcett St.
Cambridge, MA 02138

Phone: (617) 234-5915 or
(617) 234-5997
Toll-free number for schools: (877) 726-6328
Fax: (617) 868-4798

E-mail: info@co-nect.com
Web site: www.co-nect.com/

Created by a Massachusetts consulting firm, Co-NECT involves students in complex interdisciplinary projects that incorporate technology and connect students with ongoing scientific investigations, information sources, and students in other participating schools.

Core Knowledge

Dr. Connie Jones

Core Knowledge Foundation

801 E. High St.
Charlottesville, VA 22902

Phone: (804) 977-7550
Toll-free: (800) 238-3233
Fax: (804) 977-0021

Web site: www.coreknowledge.org

Core Knowledge is a set of curriculum standards based on the work of E. D. Hirsh, Jr. Teachers are provided with a specific grade-by-grade curriculum sequence, guidelines, and examples of how to teach the topics in the curriculum.

Developmental Studies Center

2000 Embarcadero, Suite 305
Oakland, CA 94606-5300

Phone: (800) 666-7270

Web site: http://www.devstu.org

Developmental Studies Center is an educational nonprofit organization that develops, evaluates, and disseminates programs to foster children's social, emotional, ethical, and academic growth. They publish an extensive catalog of materials and a substance abuse prevention program for elementary grades.

Expeditionary Learning/ Outward Bound

Margaret M. Campbell

122 Mount Auburn St.
Cambridge, MA 02138

Phone: (617) 576-1260
Toll-free: (877) 285-3019
Fax: (617) 576-1340

E-mail: info@elob.org
Web site: www.elob.org

Affiliated with Outward Bound, Expeditionary Learning is designed around learning expeditions beyond the school walls. It incorporates principles of active learning, challenge, and teamwork through extensive use of project-based learning, cooperative learning, and performance assessments.

National Center for Restructuring Education, Schools, and Teaching (NCREST)

Teachers College

525 W. 120th St., Box 110
New York, NY 10027

Phone: (212) 678-3432

Web site: www.tc.columbia.edu/~ncrest/

NCREST supports restructuring efforts by documenting successful initiatives, creating reform networks to share new research findings with practitioners, and linking policy to practice. Current NCREST projects include Professional Development Schools, teacher learning, assessment, the documentation of successful school reform efforts in elementary and secondary schools, educational technology in schools, and the development of local, state, and national policies based on practice.

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National Center on Education and the Economy

Dr. Mary Anne Mays

700 11th St. N.W., Suite 750
Washington, D.C. 20001

Phone: (202) 783-3668
Fax: (202) 783-3672

E-mail: info@ncee.org
Web site: www.ncee.org

The Center is a national alliance of states, school districts, and national organizations affiliated with the National Standards Project. Its emphasis is on systemic reform rather than school-by-school restructuring. It works with states and districts to establish standards, performance assessments, and accountability methods.

National Center to Improve Tools of Educators (NCITE)

805 Lincoln St.
Eugene, OR 97401

Web site: idea.uoregon.edu/~ncite

NCITE's purpose is to advance the quality and effectiveness of technology, media, and materials for individuals with disabilities. It creates a marketplace demand for the selection and appropriate use of research-based technology, media, and materials.

University of Minnesota
1954 Buford Ave., Room R460
St. Paul, MN 551108

Phone: (800) 808-SERV (7378)

Web site: www.nicsl.coled.umn.edu

The clearinghouse collects and disseminates information for Learn & Serve America programs and other K-12, higher education, community-based, and national service programs.

School Development Program (SDP)

Ed Joyner

Child Study Program

230 South Frontage Rd.
P.O. Box 20790
New Haven, CT 06520-7900

Phone: (203) 785-2548 or (203) 737-1020
Fax: (203) 785-3359 or (203) 737-4001

Web site: http://info.med.yale.edu/comer

SDP is a comprehensive approach to school reform in elementary and middle schools. It was designed specifically to meet the needs of African American students, but has been used in schools with diverse populations.

Success for All/Roots and Wings

Robert E. Slavin

Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed at Risk

Johns Hopkins University
200 W. Towson Town Blvd.
Baltimore, MD 21204

Toll-free: (800) 548-4998
Fax: (410) 324-4440

Web site: www.successforall.net

Success for All provides curricula and instructional methods in reading, writing, language arts, mathematics, social studies, and science. Its effects are most positive for language-minority students. Roots and Wings is a comprehensive elementary-level reform design that supplements Success for All.

2. The school reform organizations are reviewed in more detail in Fashola, O. S., & Slavin, R. E. (1998). Schoolwide reform models: What works? *Phi Delta Kappan, 79*(5), 370-379. Contact information was verified and updated in November 1999.

For Example

Problem: One urban elementary school had the lowest reading scores in the area.

Action: The principal invited interested faculty and staff to meet with her during lunch on Tuesdays to talk about ways to improve students' reading abilities. Over the course of the year, about 80% of the teachers, several parent volunteers, the librarian, the social worker, several secretaries, and a security guard attended the discussions. The group studied successful programs in other schools and visited some area schools that were using innovative programs. The principal was able to locate funding to enable six teachers to take courses at the local university and held two in-service days on the topic at which these teachers shared what they had learned. The group applied for a grant to establish a lending library for a family reading program. Several incentive systems were established to reward students for reading and related activities.

Result: Scores on standardized tests began improving, and both the student transfer and teacher turnover rates decreased.

Resources for Supporting the Academic Program

Elias, M. J., Zins, J. E., Weissberg, R. P., Frey, K. S., Greenberg, M. T., Haynes, N. M., Kessler, R., Schwab-Stone, M. E., & Shriver, T. P. (1997). *Promoting social and emotional learning: Guidelines for educators*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Gardner, R., III, Heward, W. L., & Grossi, T. A. (1994). Effects of response cards on student participation and academic achievement: A systematic replication with inner-city students during whole-class science instruction. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis, 27*, 63-71.

Lewis, C., Schaps, E., & Watson, M. (1996). The caring classroom's academic edge. *Educational Leadership, 53* (September), 16-21.

Narayan, J. S., Heward, W. L., Gardner, R., III, Courson, F. H., & Omness, C. K. (1990). Using response cards to increase student participation in an elementary classroom. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis, 23*, 483-490.

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Suggestions for Supporting a Strong Academic Program

Place a "✓" by the items already being implemented.
Place a "☆" by three or four items you would like to improve or strengthen.

What school personnel can do

- ____ Stay current on research-based best practices using professional literature, meetings, conferences, and university resources.
- ____ Incorporate research-based information on features of effective learning materials in the standards for curriculum adoption.
- ____ Use research-based best practices to guide selection of content and teaching practices.
- ____ Implement a variety of instructional techniques (such as project-based learning, service learning, cooperative learning, and group work) to accommodate a range of learning styles and interests.
- ____ Provide opportunities for students to identify problems that affect them and use classroom learning to develop plans for solving them, so that they see real-world applications of the academic content they are learning.
- ____ Have students set weekly or monthly goals for academic achievement, review them regularly, and celebrate progress.
- ____ Institute group-based contingencies for success: if all students complete their homework to a minimum standard of effort, then the whole class gets extra credit. The standard should reflect effort, not strictly academic outcome—for example, "attempts to solve every math problem," or "writes at least a one-page essay."
- ____ Set high academic standards and provide students with support and assistance to rise to that level.
- ____ Promote a culture where academic success is honored, so good students do not feel peer pressure to perform below their ability.
- ____ Actively identify students who are at risk for developmental failure and provide them with additional support to ensure they are prepared to make successful transitions to the next grade or academic setting (such as cross-age tutors, a "buddy" in the new school, an adult academic monitor and mentor).
- ____ Provide structured remedial tutoring instead of retaining students who are performing below grade level. Retention isolates students from their peers, labels them as failures, and significantly increases their likelihood of dropping out.

What families and community members can do

- ____ Lobby for funding to support a rigorous academic program.
- ____ Show interest and be involved in your child's academic activities. Maintain regular contact with your child's teacher regarding his or her success in school.
- ____ Monitor your children's homework completion and work with them on homework assignments that involve family participation.
- ____ Become role models and mentors for schoolchildren (not just your own).
- ____ Recognize and celebrate young people's creative and academic efforts and progress.
- ____ Publicize literacy programs and opportunities for community members to volunteer as tutors and readers in schools. Learn how to read interactively with beginning readers.

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_____ Tap local business people to support school-to-work transition programs, summer internships, etc., to better prepare students to enter the workforce.

_____ Sponsor community forums for discussion of best practices in education.

_____ Endorse state policies and legislation that allow individual schools and districts flexibility in selection of learning materials, assessment procedures, and classroom management.

_____ Volunteer to provide services that enrich the curriculum; for example, by coordinating after-school clubs, speaking at school events, giving students career information and workplace tours.

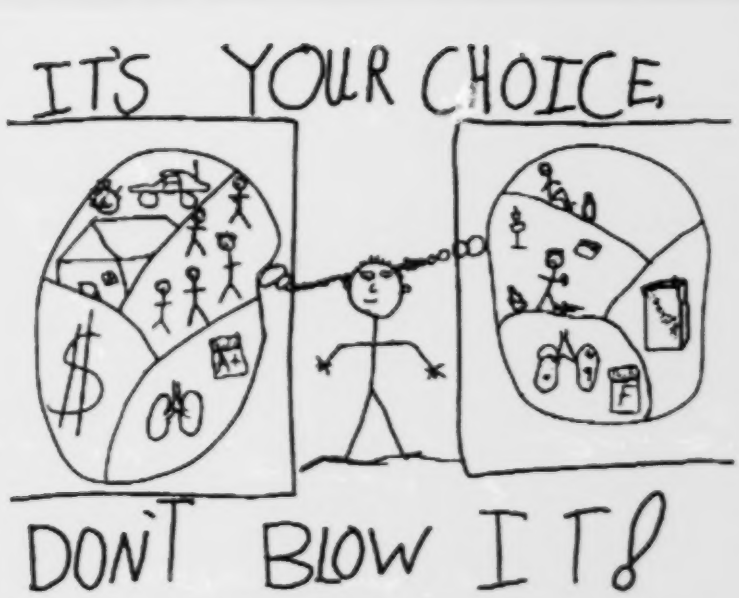
_____ Offer workshops on research-based educational practices.

_____ Establish, fund, and publicize a speakers' bureau of people willing to speak to schools and community groups on educational innovations.

_____ Make information about research-based practices available to local schools via the Internet, newsletters, etc.

no prevention program can be effective unless it is implemented as designed

Implement a Research-Based Prevention Program



Prevention curricula *provide students with:*

information about various drugs and the consequences of their use;

behavioral skills including decision making, values clarification, assertiveness, and stress management;

normative education to debunk the myths that "everyone does drugs" or that using drugs increases one's status among peers;

support in resisting pressures to experiment with risk-taking behaviors; and

social skills to decrease isolation and assist students in establishing positive friendships and social support networks.

Behavior change is most likely when prevention content is reinforced throughout other academic content areas.

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Roles and Responsibilities

ALL STAFF MEMBERS are positive role models who promote a protective school culture and activities that reinforce positive messages.

TEACHERS actively participate in selecting research-based curricula and learning to implement each curriculum as it is designed.

PRINCIPALS learn about principles of prevention and make school resources available to support effective prevention activities. They organize a process for selecting effective curricula that meet their school's needs and prepare all faculty to implement it faithfully.

SUPERINTENDENTS AND SCHOOL BOARDS make prevention an explicit goal and priority and provide funding to back prevention efforts. They provide schools with direction and support in implementing research-based curricula.

STATE AND FEDERAL POLITICIANS learn about principles of prevention. They propose and endorse curriculum adoption standards and funding allocations that encourage schools to adopt research-based curricula.

PARENTS seek accurate information about alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs. They talk to children in the family about substance use and their personal values.

COMMUNITY MEMBERS work with schools and community coalitions to identify and eliminate mixed messages about substance use that appear in the community (for example, selling beer at the concession stand during teen night at the ball park).

Reaching Success

Select and implement an effective prevention program or curriculum that:

- ☑ is based on sound scientific principles and strategies validated by research;
- ☑ presents relevant and developmentally appropriate information and skills at each grade level;
- ☑ uses highly interactive teaching strategies (such as role playing, brainstorming, small-group work, service learning);
- ☑ resonates with the cultural values of the target audience, in terms of age, ethnicity, school situation, etc.;
- ☑ addresses the contexts in which members of the target audience are likely to encounter drugs (or conflicts or decisions about sexual activity);
- ☑ is taught by educators well trained in the curriculum and prevention concepts, so they can present the program faithfully but make adaptations where appropriate for the target audience;
- ☑ is based on behavioral or cognitive-behavioral principles, such as modeling, behavioral and cognitive rehearsal, coaching and feedback, cueing, and goal setting and commitment making; and
- ☑ provides ample opportunity for practice and rehearsal of skills in realistic situations.

The effect of a prevention curriculum cannot be assessed entirely by traditional means of educational assessment. Gains in knowledge about drugs, which may show up on pencil-and-paper tests, are not sufficient to change attitudes and behavior.

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Rewards!

A protective environment supports healthy youth development but may not provide students with specific information about the risks and consequences of drug use nor the skills they need to refuse drugs while maintaining friendships (for example, how to respond if a joint is being passed around at a party).

All students need the information and skills to make healthy decisions about using alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs at some time during their teenage years. No school, socioeconomic class, race, or location makes children immune to drugs. In fact, counter to common stereotypes, alcohol use is higher among suburban children in relatively wealthy schools.

It is cost-effective. The school can implement effective, proven strategies for prevention, rather than spending money and effort on dubious programs that may have little effect or in fact backfire.

Students acquire the skills and information to make healthy lifestyle decisions, including those about alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs.

Tools

During the past decade, research has identified a number of curricula that have documented efficacy in reducing the use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs, as well as other risk-taking behavior. These are not necessarily the most widely known, heavily marketed, or expensive programs, but they have evaluation and theoretical underpinnings to support their effectiveness. Consult the following guides before making decisions about curriculum selection:

Blueprints for Violence Prevention (1998)

identifies ten model programs for violence and substance abuse prevention.

Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence

University of Colorado
Boulder, CO 80309-0442

Phone: (303) 492-8465
Fax: (303) 443-3297

Web site: www.colorado.edu/cspv/blueprints/index.html

Here's Proof Prevention Works

and

Understanding Substance Abuse Prevention: Toward the 21st Century: A Primer on Effective Programs (1999)

are two sources that provide information about eight programs meeting high standards for proven efficacy.

National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information (NCADI)

P.O. Box 2345
Rockville, MD 20847-2345

Phone: (800) 729-6686

Web site: www.health.org

Making the Grade: A Guide to School Drug Prevention Programs (1999)

evaluates and describes commercially available drug prevention curricula.

and

Safe Schools, Safe Students: A Guide to Violence Prevention Strategies (1998)

evaluates and describes commercially available violence prevention curricula.

Both are available from:

Drug Strategies

1575 Eye Street, NW, Suite 210
Washington, DC 20005

Phone: (202) 289-9070
Fax: (202) 424-6199

Web site: www.drugstrategies.org

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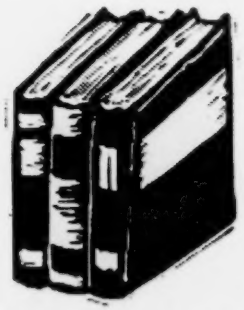
For Example

Problem: Personnel in a school district with several schools at each level and a high mobility rate across the district wanted to coordinate district drug abuse prevention efforts so that all students, regardless of the school or schools they attended, would receive consistent prevention programming in each grade. They recognized that highly mobile students have increased risk of developmental failure and less consistent access to prevention programs because of their frequent school changes.

Action: The prevention coordinator used one of the guides evaluating current drug prevention curricula to select several top-rated curricula, which she ordered for review. A committee of representatives from each school, parents, and staff from community-based prevention agencies reviewed all the curricula and selected the one that best met the district's needs. The coordinator made special arrangements for district-wide training at a reduced cost.

Result: The curriculum was widely implemented, at a lower cost than if the schools had acted separately. Staff were universally trained to implement the curriculum, and consistent programming was achieved.



Resources for Implementing a Prevention Program

Albee, G. W., & Gullotta, T. P. (Eds.). (1997). *Primary prevention works*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Battistich, V., Schaps, E., & Branden-Muller, L. R. (1992). Two school-based approaches to promoting children's social competence. In G. W. Albee, L. A. Bond, & T.V.C. Monsey (Eds.), *Improving children's lives: Global perspectives on prevention*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Bosworth, K. (Ed.). (1998). *New directions in drug education programs*. Bloomington, IN: Phi Delta Kappa International. www.pdkintl.org

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (1994). Guidelines for school programs to prevent tobacco use and addiction. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, 43*(RR-2), 1-18.

Division of Adolescent and School Health. Research to Classroom Project. This project identifies health curricula that show credible evidence of positively influencing specific risk behaviors among school-age youth. See their Web site at www.edc.org/NTP/PTW/ptwresearch2classroom.html.

Dusenbury, L., & Falco, M. (1995). Eleven components of effective drug abuse prevention curricula. *Journal of School Health, 65*(10), 420-425.

Education Development Center, Inc. (1995). *Choosing the tools: A review of selected K-12 health education curricula*. Newton, MA: Education Development Center.

Ennett, S. J., Flewelling, R. L., Lindrooth, R. C., & Norton, E. C. (1997). School and neighborhood characteristics associated with school rates of alcohol, cigarette, and marijuana use. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior, 38*, 55-71.

Glanz, K., Lewis, F. M., & Rimer, B. K. (1990). *Health behavior and health education: Theory, research and practice*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Rohrbach, L. A., D'Onofrio, C. N., Backer, T. E., & Montgomery, S. B. (1996). Diffusion of school-based substance abuse prevention programs. *American Behavioral Scientist, 39*(7), 919-934.

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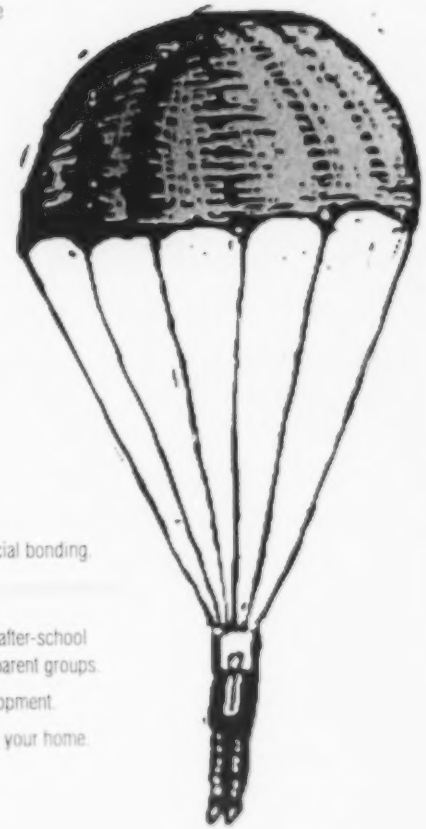
Suggestions for Implementing Research-Based Prevention

Place a "✓" by the items already being implemented.
Place a "✓✓" by three or four items you would like to improve or strengthen.

What school personnel can do

- ____ Conduct a needs assessment to determine student vulnerability and requirements for service.
- ____ Ensure that the goals of the prevention program are clearly specified and are tied to the intervention procedures.
- ____ Adopt a curriculum that is based on principles and strategies that have been scientifically validated and are testable (see the "Tools" section for guides to curriculum selection).
- ____ Utilize community services and agencies—such as colleges and universities, treatment centers, and community prevention coalitions—to assist in identification of effective strategies.
- ____ Select a curriculum that sequentially develops relevant skills and knowledge geared to different grade levels.
- ____ Seek a curriculum with the flexibility to be adapted to students with a variety of needs, capabilities, interests, and cultural backgrounds.
- ____ Provide adequate training to ensure school personnel can implement the program as it is designed.
- ____ Provide training in the principles of prevention so instructors are able to adapt the presentation to be relevant to their students.
- ____ Integrate prevention content into the academic content students are learning to reinforce prevention messages.
- ____ Ask that those who market prevention programs provide information such as:
  - clear demonstrations of how their program works;
  - explanations of how it might fit into the frameworks that are already in place in your school; and
  - contacts from similar schools that have implemented the program, so you can obtain information about how the program has worked for them.
- ____ Actively teach social skills to all students beginning at the preschool or elementary school levels to encourage social bonding.



What families and community members can do

- ____ Increase public knowledge about principles of good prevention, including what families and community agencies/after-school programs can do, by sponsoring community forums or making information available through PTA/PTO and similar parent groups.
- ____ Reinforce your personal values in your daily interactions with children and express your support for healthy development.
- ____ Learn the principles of prevention and the warning signs of substance abuse. Reinforce making healthy choices in your home.
- ____ Involve children in age-appropriate family decision making and give them responsibilities at home.

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What policy makers can do

- _____ Emphasize a positive view of prevention as promoting healthy development and enabling all students—not just those at high risk for negative outcomes—to achieve to their highest potential.
- _____ Provide financial support for prevention by underwriting the costs of curricula, training, community forums, etc.
- _____ Provide incentives for schools to use research-based materials.

What universities and researchers can do

- _____ Create collaborative partnerships with local school districts to disseminate prevention information into practice and learn more about how to design practical and user-friendly materials that meet educators' needs.
- _____ Include prevention principles and strategies in pre-service training programs.
- _____ Translate the results of scientific research into guidelines that can be used to evaluate the relative merits of various curricula.

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in a continuum of intervention, barriers to learning are addressed through a comprehensive, multifaceted, and integrated spectrum of intervention services

Provide a Continuum of Services

Because substance use and related youth problems are complicated and multifaceted, multiple levels of intervention must be available and coordinated so that students can receive timely assistance appropriate to their level of need. This proposed continuum has three facets:

1. Content and strategies are geared to be meaningful and developmentally sequenced at different age and grade levels (for example, kindergartners learn about poison safety, not drug resistance skills).
2. At each grade level, there are at least three different "doses" or strengths of intervention to meet students' levels of need: universal, selected, and indicated.

   universal: strategies, such as assertiveness training and decision making skills, that are presented to all students. When all students are taught basic skills, this reduces the number who need more intensive levels of intervention.

   selected: additional instruction and support given to students who are at high risk but have not yet exhibited problems. For example, children of alcoholics may have a physiological predisposition toward substance abuse, and students who are not bonded to school are at very high risk for negative outcomes.

   indicated: special programs designed to prevent the progression from experimentation with drugs to habitual use. For example, students who have been caught with cigarettes on a field trip might get an intensive smoking intervention.

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3. The levels of intervention are coordinated, so students can move among levels with minimal disruption to their routine or the services delivered to them.

Such specialized services are integrated in the life of a protective school to promote a positive culture. Some advocate that implementing a continuum of intervention ultimately requires a complete restructuring of the support services component in the U.S. educational system. This is unlikely in the short term, but there are immediate steps school or district personnel can take to address the continuum of service delivery.

Roles and Responsibilities

SPECIALIZED SERVICE PROVIDERS—such as health educators, school counselors, school nurses, or social workers—often have responsibility for coordinating and providing prevention efforts.

PRINCIPALS evaluate what support services are available in their school and how to restructure and coordinate them with community-based services to best meet students' needs and avoid duplication and overlap.

SUPERINTENDENTS, SCHOOL BOARDS, AND STATE AND FEDERAL POLITICIANS relax bureaucratic regulations on schools and outside agencies to facilitate cooperative efforts. They review prevention efforts in district schools to identify conflicting strategies that give students mixed messages about how they should behave (for example, a designated driver program on prom night in conjunction with an abstinence-only alcohol curriculum).

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Reaching Success

☐ **Coordination of school-based support services:** The responsibilities for prevention in a school must be reorganized and coordinated to prevent duplication in services or gaps in service delivery. The following situation is an example of how prevention is organized in many schools:

In Mountain View Middle School, the social studies teachers were presenting a specific social skills curriculum, the school nurse was teaching reproductive health using another curriculum, representatives of a community agency were coming to the school to present a drug prevention program, the school counselor was facilitating a social skills group for students who had been referred for discipline infractions, and the assistant principal was writing her doctoral dissertation about a peer mediation program she had organized.

To improve coordination, the assistant principal formed a prevention coordination committee with members of all these groups. They completed an audit of services, which revealed both duplications and gaps in services. An expert from the County Extension Office was called in to help them develop a plan based on a research-based prevention model. The following changes were adopted:

1. With student input, the various efforts were evaluated for effectiveness and the most valuable components targeted for retention. Redundant and conflicting components of the various curricula were identified.
2. A new health studies course was designed, with units team-taught by the health teacher, a social studies teacher, the nurse, and an instructor from the community drug-prevention agency. This became the universal prevention all students received.
3. Once the basic content was designed, age-appropriate modules were developed for each grade level.
4. The module in the course that presented health and drug information was followed by introduction of relevant social skills. The role playing component of the social skills practice was revised to incorporate drug and health content.
5. Basic concepts of dispute resolution from the peer mediation program were presented during the health studies course (universal intervention). A standardized referral system was established so faculty, staff, and administrators could assign specific pairs of students for mediation of disputes (indicated intervention).
6. The school social worker and school counselor worked with administrators to establish a confidential referral system all staff could use to get more information about particular issues or to refer students with potential problems for special assistance (selective/indicated intervention).
7. During a day-long in-service, all staff members received basic training in prevention and in warning signs that suggest a student might be in trouble. Individual departments scheduled follow-up meetings where faculty brainstormed ways to integrate prevention into academic content.
8. At the end of the semester, students completed an anonymous course survey to provide feedback on the health studies course and help identify unmet needs.

☐ **Integration with the community:** The school exists within a community, and many high-risk students will receive both community-based and school-based services. These services are coordinated to support and supplement each other rather than to conflict or duplicate effort.

☐ **School and community capacity building:** Procedures, resources, personnel, and other infrastructure are set up to ensure that coordination and integration of services become institutionalized.

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Rewards!

Many problems have the same or similar underlying causes. Ensuring that all students receive comprehensive general approaches cuts down on the number who need intensive intervention. This avoids the proliferation of separate, narrowly focused, specialist-intensive programs for each observed problem.

A comprehensive, integrated spectrum of interventions ensures that school personnel can:

- provide support for healthy development;
- prevent the onset of problems; intervene early after onset of problems; and
- provide ongoing assistance as needed.

Having specialized intervention as well as universal prevention strategies available helps a school meet the needs of students with high or specialized risk factors.

More students will have a support system, skills, and resources available when they need to make decisions.

Tools

Several researchers have proposed ways to maximize resources and increase the efficacy of school service delivery.

Howard Adelman and colleagues[1] have proposed the following:

To adequately prepare students for academic success, their physical, emotional, and mental-health needs must be met first.

Providing comprehensive, multifaceted, and coordinated resources that eliminate barriers to learning can allow all students to reach their fullest potential without costing any more than the current, disruptive system of individualized pullout services.

The social-service component should be restructured as a third component of education, as important as instruction and administration.

Instead of a "one size fits all" intervention, school personnel should have available a choice of strategies and techniques at different "dose levels," in order to effectively serve students with a wide range of needs (a concept often called *wrap-around services*).

Joy Dryfoos and others[2] have described *full-service schools*, in which families are able to access health, social services, and educational assistance at the school site, through collaborative and cooperative arrangements between school-owned and community-owned resources. School-owned services are restructured to supplement and fill gaps in available community-owned services.

In *student assistance programs* (SAPs)[3] a team, typically including school personnel and students, is trained to do initial assessments of troubled students and provide appropriate referrals. They conduct informal assessment of the sources of the student's problems and provide referrals to appropriate community-based agencies, sometimes as an adjunct or alternative to disciplinary action. Student assistance programs incorporate many of the same strategies listed above to promote students' success and promptly address barriers to learning.

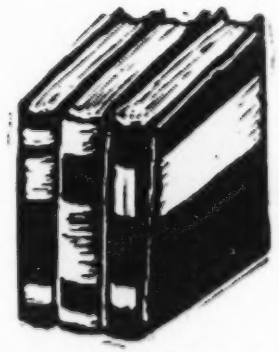
1. For an overview, see Adelman, H. S., & Taylor, L. (1997). Addressing barriers to learning: Beyond school-linked services and full-service schools. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 67*, 408-421.
2. See, for example, Dryfoos, J. G. (1994). *Full-service schools: A revolution in health and social services for children, youth, and families*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
3. For more information about student assistance programs, see Rainey, L. M., Hensley, F. A., & Crutchfield, L. B. (1997). Implementation of support groups in elementary and middle school assistance programs. *Professional School Counseling, 1*(2), 36-40; Moore, D. D., & Forster, J. R. (1993). Student assistance programs: New approaches for reducing adolescent substance abuse. *Journal of Counseling and Development, 71*(3), 326-29.

For Example

Problem: In a middle school located in the center of a major urban area, illness and difficulties accessing health care were identified as a major cause of absences, as well as a contributor to students' performing below their potential. The itinerant school nurse was on site only one day a week, so little could be done with school resources to improve the problem.

Action: The principal negotiated with various community agencies to locate on campus a medical and dental clinic accepting both insurance reimbursement and Medicaid. School support personnel, such as the counselor and social worker, located their offices in the clinic area to facilitate referrals and team efforts at family assistance.

Result: Both school faculty and families perceived the clinic as the single most important innovation this school had made. Not only did more students receive regular basic health care, but families frequently came to the school to access health services. During these visits many stopped by their child's classroom or developed relationships with other school personnel, improving home-school relations.



Resources for a Continuum of Services

Adler, L., & Gardner, S. (Eds.) (1994). *The politics of linking schools and social services*. Washington, D.C.: Falmer Press.

The Center for Mental Health in Schools, Department of Psychology, University of California Los Angeles, Los Angeles, CA 90095-1563. http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu. The Center has a variety of publications available and publishes a quarterly newsletter, *Addressing Barriers to Learning*, which addresses a variety of topics related to school culture and ways to enable student learning. It also publishes a monthly electronic newsletter; to subscribe at no charge, send an e-mail to: maiser@bulletin.psych.ucla.edu.

Comer, J. P., Haynes, N. M., Joyner, E., Ben-Avie, M. (1996). *Rallying the whole village: The Comer process for reforming education*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Kirst, M. W. (1991). Improving children's services: Overcoming barriers, creating new opportunities. *Phi Delta Kappan, 72*, 615-618.

Roberts, M., & Task Force on Model Programs in Service Delivery. (1996). *Model programs in child and family mental health*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum & Associates.

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Suggestions for Providing a Continuum of Services

Place a "✓" by the items already being implemented.
Place a "☆" by three or four items you would like to improve or strengthen.

What school personnel can do

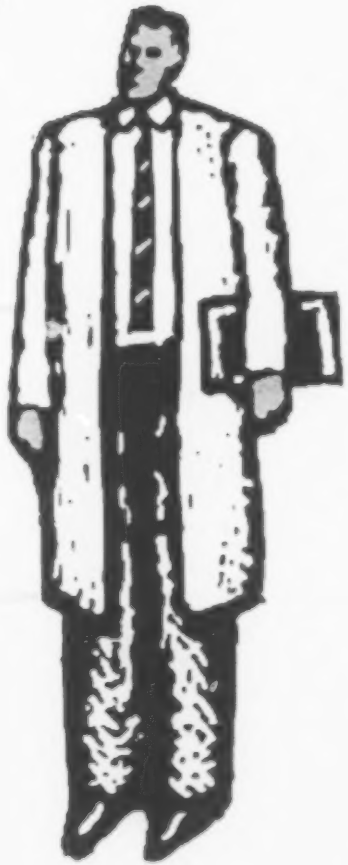
- Whenever possible, blend prevention and intervention into the context of regular school activities, rather than labeling students and pulling them out for special programs. Use the least restrictive and intrusive forms of intervention necessary to address problems and accommodate differences.
- Use needs assessments to match universal, selective, or indicated strategies to individual students' needs.
- Assign one person the responsibility of coordinating services and working with specialized service providers to ensure continuity and efficiency of service delivery. Allocate the time and resources to allow them to do these tasks.
- Arrange for school-based service providers to meet regularly to improve coordination of services.
- Form collaborative relationships with community-based services to meet needs in your school.
- Provide adequate space within the school for both school- and community-based service providers.
- Educate faculty and staff about services available in the community.

What families and community members can do

- Promote reform efforts directed at collaboration and coordination between school-based and community-based social services, to streamline service delivery and minimize duplication of efforts.
- Increase public support for prevention programs by presenting prevention positively, as building on strengths, rather than fixing something wrong with students.
- Provide personnel and financial resources for planning and coordinating a continuum of resources.
- Increase incentives for community agencies to actively coordinate with the school system.
- Link community-based health and social services to schools in order to coordinate service and enhance access.

What universities and researchers can do

- Institute multidisciplinary coursework and cross-training opportunities for service providers and professionals who will work with young people; for example, social workers, school counselors, teachers, nurses, or police officers.
- Disseminate scientifically validated information about what works for the various levels of prevention.
- Include training in the process of systematic organizational change as part of teacher preparation and educational leadership courses.



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a protective school has informed and empowered faculty and staff

Provide Ongoing Professional Development

Professional development *is not an activity but a way of being where learning is suffused throughout teachers' lives. It covers a range of options for updating and developing the skills of faculty and support staff beyond their university training, including in-services, conferences, workshops, continuing education, coaching, and on-the-job training. Effective prevention practitioners and educators need information and skills in several domains related to both teaching and prevention: knowledge base, skills base, and skills for structural and organizational change.*

Knowledge base

Accurate information about various drugs, trends of use, and risk and protective factors for drug use, violent behavior, and pregnancy/sexually transmitted diseases

Information about effective models of prevention

Methods for developmentally sequencing the presentation of concepts to students

Information about educational and instructional innovations, including interactive learning techniques and methods of proactive classroom management

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Instructional skills

Teaching and behavior management strategies that increase desired behavior and constrain undesired behavior

Effective pacing and tempo for instruction

Specific strategies (role-playing, service learning, guided discussion, etc.) used in prevention curricula

Ways to structure behavioral instruction so students can apply their learning to real-life situations

Organizational change skills

Models of change

Information and support throughout the change process

Information on how to implement new processes, programs, and procedures

Roles and Responsibilities

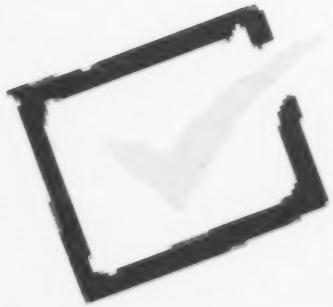
TEACHERS design and structure their own professional development. They seek out training opportunities that meet their goals and apply for release time and reimbursement to attend.

PRINCIPALS support a culture of valuing professional development and participate themselves in professional development opportunities. They set professional development goals for their school.

SUPERINTENDENTS AND SCHOOL BOARDS provide administrative support for professional development, including funding and release time.

COMMUNITY MEMBERS publicize community prevention and educational forums and seminars at schools and invite participation by educators.

Reaching Success



- ☐ Establish a tangible vision of what effective professional development can accomplish in your school.
- ☐ Look at systems and structures in the school, and how they can be modified to support a culture of advancing professional development.
- ☐ Collaboratively identify the greatest problems and needs in the school, and the skills needed to implement desired changes.
- ☐ Identify what types and areas of professional development are the most critical for creating these skill capacities in staff.
- ☐ Identify options for allocating time and resources to enable on-site professional development—such as an extended-year contract, flexible scheduling with late-start or early-release days, study groups, a week-long retreat in the summer, after-school meetings, resource sharing with community organizations, and pooling of district resources.
- ☐ Build in flexibility so staff can assume responsibility for their own professional development and select components most relevant to them (for example, in one school, every teacher could apply for a professional development stipend by documenting how the proposal tied into the school action plan).
- ☐ Use ongoing collaborative problem solving to identify progress and needs for future development.

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Rewards!

Taking action in any of the areas suggested in this document may require faculty and staff to make significant changes in everything from teaching strategies to behavior management to daily interactions with students. Providing information and support will help make the change process more efficient and less stressful.

Schools cannot become exciting places for children to learn unless they first become exciting learning places for the adults who work there as well.

When teachers work in isolation and feel a "sink or swim" mentality, they may feel less secure about their own abilities and fall into teaching as they were taught.

When people are placed in situations with high intrinsic motivation, they produce more innovative work. High extrinsic constraints may lead to more efficiency, but produce less innovative and original work.

With effective professional development, all school personnel will have basic knowledge and skills to contribute to the school prevention effort. They will feel more confident and competent in carrying out prevention activities, in supporting and coaching each other, and in fulfilling their primary job responsibilities.

School personnel will be more likely to recognize the students who often "fall through the cracks" (such as students who do not have behavior or academic difficulties but are socially isolated or depressed) and provide timely adult support before they develop serious problems.

When school personnel have positive approaches to help them deal with problems proactively, morale improves and stress decreases, reducing turnover.

Tools

Several features of effective training have been suggested.

According to Linda Darling-Hammond, effective professional development strategies are:[1]

experiential, so teachers learn about the processes of learning and development through concrete tasks of teaching, assessment, and observation;

grounded in participants' questions, based on their inquiry, experimentation, and professional research;

collaborative, so teachers have opportunities to network and share knowledge;

relevant and connected to teachers' work with students, teaching methods, and subject matter;

sustained and intensive, incorporating modeling, coaching, and problem solving for specific problems of practice; and

interconnected with other aspects of school reform and innovation.

Professional development can increase teacher compliance with implementation of a prevention program.

Phyllis Gingiss and colleagues suggest the following:[2]

1. Plan an in-service workshop for all staff in order to demonstrate the school's commitment to the prevention program. Provide skills training as well as opportunities to develop an interpersonal support system, shared commitment, and initiation of campus-level planning. During this workshop, identify those teachers who are highly receptive to prevention education and the proposed prevention program.
2. Involve these natural leaders in recruiting and training less enthusiastic colleagues. Provide social and status incentives to the receptive teachers for their involvement in the program.
3. Identify teachers with low levels of receptivity and personal involvement in the program. They are unlikely to initiate or maintain implementation of the prevention program. For these teachers, schedule follow-up programs to foster social support. Also schedule school-, district-, or region-wide booster workshops to strengthen their receptivity to and personal involvement in prevention education.
4. Use experienced, enthusiastic teachers as coaches who provide social support, modeling, and guided practice.

1 Darling-Hammond, L. (1998). Teacher learning that supports student learning. *Educational Leadership, 55*(5), 6-10.

2 Gingiss, P.L., Gottlieb, N.H., & Brink, S.G. (1994). Increasing teacher receptivity toward use of tobacco prevention education programs. *Journal of Drug Education, 24*(2), 163-175.

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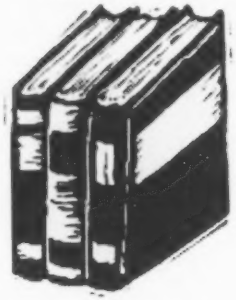
Problem: A principal and two teachers in a large middle school went to a statewide training on service learning. They came back excited about the possibilities but decided they needed more support to integrate this technique into their work.



Action: They decided to meet for an hour before school every other Tuesday to brainstorm and coach each other in implementing service learning. All faculty were sent information about service learning and invited to attend. Members shared experiences, information on books and other resources, and feedback on proposed projects.

Result: By the end of the first semester, ten faculty members were regularly attending. By the end of the year, nearly a third of the faculty and several other staff members (including the librarian, a counselor, and an assistant principal) were participating regularly.

Darling-Hammond, L. (1997). *The right to learn*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Killion, J. (1999). *What works in the middle: Results-based staff development*. Oxford, OH: National Staff Development Council.

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National Education Commission on Time and Learning. (1994). *Prisoners of time*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office.

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Suggestions for Providing Professional Development

Place a "✓" by the items already being implemented.
Place a "!" by three or four items you would like to improve or strengthen.

_____ Establish a district-wide norm of valuing participation in personal and professional development experiences.

_____ Strengthen the ongoing system of professional development and the infrastructure to support it.

_____ Link professional development to the school vision and individual strengths and weaknesses.

_____ Provide all staff—from teachers to special service providers to cafeteria workers, custodians, and bus drivers—with basic information about the principles of effective prevention (both models and content).

_____ Investigate a variety of staff training opportunities (such as formal in-services, reimbursement for outside courses or conferences, peer reflection, working in groups on specific problems, etc.).

_____ Conduct needs assessments to create a schoolwide staff development plan that reflects school goals and ensures comprehensive training rather than patchworks of expertise.

_____ Hire teachers and other staff who have training or experience in prevention.

_____ Implement informal learning opportunities for teachers. For example, schedule a segment in faculty meetings where teachers share insights and what works for them with one another.

_____ Provide opportunities for faculty and staff who attend specialized training to share what they have learned with others. Utilize the train-the-trainer model.

_____ Set up in-school teacher-to-teacher learning partnerships so teachers can support and learn from each other.

_____ Schedule training experiences allowing professional staff to develop skills in student-centered learning, role-playing, service learning, project-based learning, and other methods used in prevention curricula.

_____ Seek out community-operated training opportunities, instead of focusing solely on school-sponsored activities.

_____ Encourage teaching staff to use the Internet to seek innovative strategies, participate in education chat groups, etc.

_____ Create a "Journal Club," in which staff and faculty meet monthly to discuss professional journal articles about prevention and educational practice.

_____ Create a circulating library of articles, books, and tapes on research-based prevention and teaching techniques.

_____ Seek funding from drug-free schools initiatives, local foundations, service groups, etc., to pay for staff development.

_____ Include prevention messages with attendance lists and other regular communications.

_____ Use the district-wide professional development office to publicize training opportunities and assist individuals in identifying resources to meet specific needs.

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- _____ Set up prevention training open to the public and encourage community participation.
- _____ Publicize educational events in the community that are relevant for faculty and staff, such as lectures, speakers or panel discussions.
- _____ Support budgets that provide funds for training teachers and other adults who work with youth.
- _____ When funds are being allocated, lobby for a salary structure that reflects prevention training and credentials.
- _____ Financially support organizations that provide prevention training to the general public.
- _____ Provide funding for Web sites and other communication channels that can provide information and training to a broad segment of the population.

- _____ Sponsor and organize prevention training opportunities open to public participation.
- _____ Provide program-specific training so teachers can learn to implement a specific, effective program.
- _____ Offer advanced courses at times when working professionals can take them.
- _____ Seek out materials that present both theory and applied examples.
- _____ Promote and support exchange of ideas and expertise between academic and practical settings.
- _____ Establish ongoing, low-cost, and convenient programs, lectures, and workshops that enable practicing teachers to update and refresh their skills.
- _____ Create Web-based training in new teaching methods and prevention strategies.
- _____ Set up a cooperative program in which university students can earn credit for internships or volunteer work in local schools.
- _____ Arrange with local school districts to schedule selected courses or mini-courses in the community or at the school during evening hours.
- _____ Explore opportunities for distance learning via cable or Internet to make university courses available to personnel in rural or isolated schools.
- _____ Organize flexible course structures that enable education professionals to earn credit for practical research or development of materials.
- _____ Integrate prevention concepts and multidisciplinary training opportunities into teacher preparation courses.
- _____ Work with teachers' organizations to establish expectations, incentives, and course offerings for continuing education.
- _____ Work with teachers' organizations to offer teacher certification programs, including credentials in prevention.

Strengthen Home-School-Community Relationships

schools, families, and communities must collaborate to support young people in making wise choices about risky behaviors

with families and other community members in a protective school:

- gives parents input and involvement in the education of their children;
- increases total school-community collaboration and cooperation on issues of common concern;
- increases the stakeholders in our educational system; and
- broadens public support for education.

Students' risk-taking behaviors, such as drug use, sexual activity, and delinquency typically occur at home or in the community. Although they may not be highly visible in the school setting, they may dramatically affect a student's education.

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Roles and Responsibilities

ALL STAFF MEMBERS regularly communicate with families about programs and activities, solicit family participation in classroom activities, and include families in planning and carrying out school events. They become involved in community organizations to increase their participation and visibility in the community.

PARENTS become actively involved in the school, participate in developing and implementing the school vision and mission statement, support school events, and support their own children's academic work.

COMMUNITY MEMBERS model, support, and expect healthy behaviors, a feature strongly correlated with more positive health behaviors among adolescents. Community members reinforce and extend school-based prevention efforts.

Reaching Success

School faculty and staff:

- ☐ create a welcoming campus environment for visitors;
- ☐ assist parents in monitoring their children (an important protective factor) by communicating regularly with parents regarding their child's education, actions at school, and involvement in school and community activities;
- ☐ provide families with information about prevention and assist them in locating resources to solve challenges;
- ☐ take the lead in initiating opportunities for communication and collaboration among families, schools, local social service agencies, community leaders, neighbors, and other concerned community members;
- ☐ reach out to the people in students' community support systems, including extended family members, coaches, religious teachers, neighbors, business owners, etc.;
- ☐ establish clear avenues for families and community members to communicate with the school;
- ☐ are responsive to community feedback;
- ☐ contribute to the quality of life in the wider community by volunteering in their community and involving students in community service projects;
- ☐ work with community organizations to counter negative media and societal influences on students, both indirectly through modeling and directly through open discussion and education;
- ☐ publicize school and student successes in the local media to increase public commitment and support for education, facilitate specific programs, and attract resources to the school;
- ☐ invite family and community members to take active and regular roles in the daily operation of the school; and
- ☐ create opportunities for the school community to meet in informal social settings; for example, in one school, staff organized a tailgate party before all home football games, and participating families contributed to cover the costs of food and soda.

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Tools

School personnel need frameworks for selecting practices that address their home-school communication goals and meet the needs of their students and families.

Joyce Epstein and colleagues have outlined a six-pronged model of family involvement.[1]

Parenting: activities that assist parents with parenting and child-rearing skills, knowledge about child and adolescent development, and establishing home conditions that support healthy growth in children.

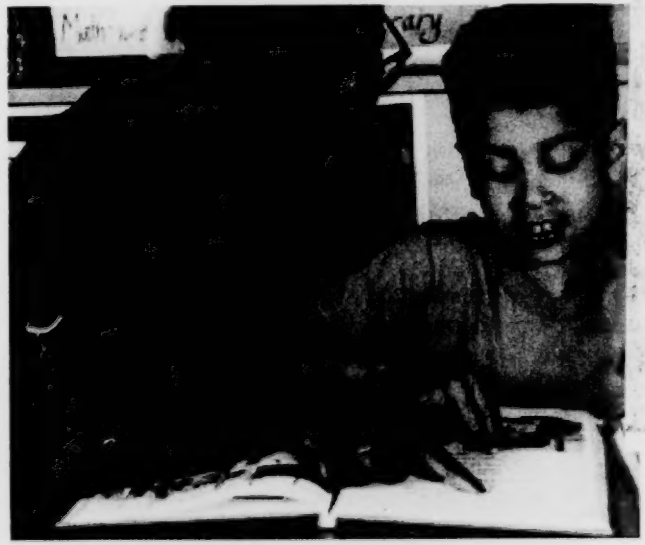
Communicating: effective avenues for home-to-school and school-to-home communication about school programs and student progress.

Volunteering: strategies to improve family attendance at school events and recruit volunteers to take the load off teachers, be role models for students, be a presence in the school, and provide career and school-to-work guidance.

Learning at home: ways to involve students and families in learning activities at home, including homework and other curriculum-related activities and decisions.

Decision making: inclusion of families as participants in school decisions, governance, and advocacy through site councils and other parent organizations.

Collaborating with the community: ways the school can provide services to the community and serve as a liaison between families and community businesses and agencies to ensure families receive needed services.



1 Adapted from Epstein, J. L., Coates, L., Salinas, K. C., Sanders, M. G., & Simon, B. S. (1997). *School, family, and community partnerships: Your handbook for action.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press. See also the Center for Social Organization of Schools (CSOS) Web site at www.csos.jhu.edu/p2000/index.htm.

Rewards!

Collaboration among the important people in various areas of students' lives leads to more consistent messages about values and expectations.

The more that adults model healthy, prosocial behavior (even if they never address prevention directly), the more likely students are to internalize these behaviors.

School-community collaborations can target drug, violence, and pregnancy prevention in the contexts where young people are most likely to be engaged in those behaviors.

Parents who themselves had negative school experiences may distrust the school system and be reluctant to become involved. A welcoming school that serves as a support system for families can turn negative attitudes around and help parents give their children a school experience different from theirs.

If parents view school personnel as a supportive resource for information, and school personnel are knowledgeable about services available to help families and children facing challenges, early intervention for problems is more likely.

The workers of the future will be expected to work in collaborative problem-solving teams. Opportunities to make decisions about their lives at school and their learning experiences will help students develop these skills.

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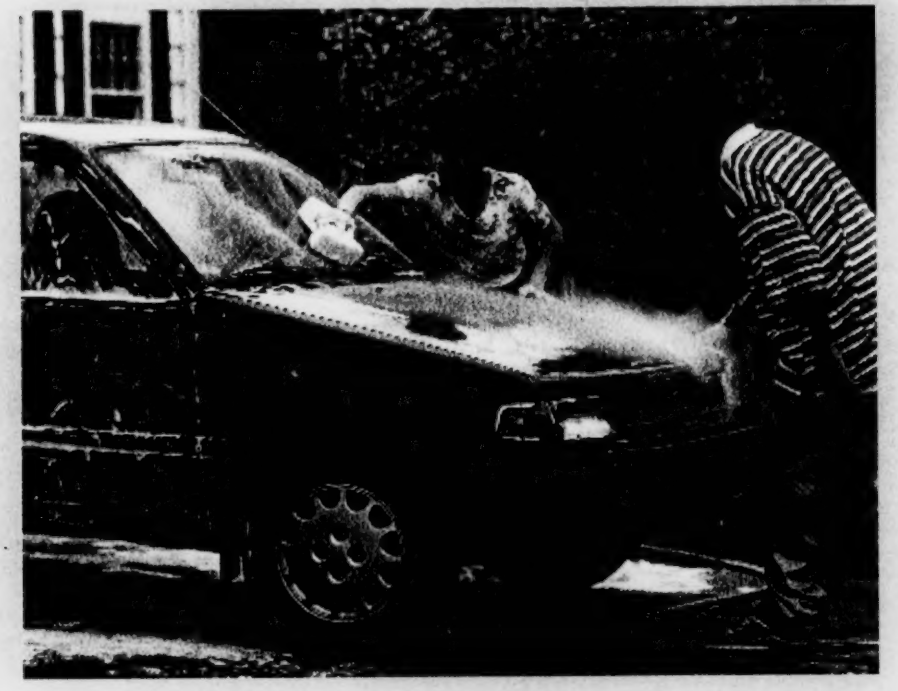
For Example

Problem: Vandalism and shoplifting by school-age youth were hurting business owners in a low-income neighborhood and creating tension between the school and the surrounding neighborhood.

Action: Several classes at the school adopted a local convenience store, with students helping to repair vandalism damage and creating posters that promoted prosocial behavior for display in the store.

Result: Problems with vandalism and shoplifting dramatically decreased. The school became a catalyst for change in the neighborhood.



Resources for Strengthening Home-School-Community Relationships

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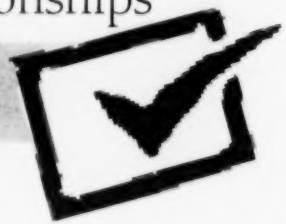
Suggestions for Strengthening Home-School-Community Relationships

Place a "✓" by the items already being implemented.
Place a "+" by three or four items you would like to improve or strengthen.



_____ Create a culture of invitation to visitors (for example, by appointing a volunteer or student to welcome and assist them).

_____ Give families a channel to bring their needs to the school and locate a support network. Present the school as providing a service to families, rather than being one more institution they have to cope with.

_____ Visit families in their homes.

_____ Hold some parent-teacher meetings or parent nights off school grounds (such as at a neighborhood center) to increase participation of hard-to-reach parents, who may feel uncomfortable in the school environment.

_____ Encourage faculty and staff to become involved in health-promoting activities in the community, such as the Great American Smoke-Out, Mothers Against Drunk Driving, or Race for the Cure.

_____ Establish an ongoing process for soliciting feedback from students, families, and the community.

_____ Make strong outreach efforts to the community (such as publicizing the good things that are happening at your school in local media; keeping in contact with parents through notes, phone calls, etc.; and giving school neighbors a means to contact school personnel with concerns or compliments).

_____ Offer many and varied opportunities for families and community members to contribute to the school, and acknowledge many different types of contributions in newsletters, press releases, and appreciation days.

_____ Be creative in identifying volunteer opportunities.

- Ask teachers, librarians, cafeteria workers, etc., to state what help they need.
- Make these needs known at parent nights, family conferences, etc., and ask family members if they can and would like to help.
- Create job descriptions and want ads and mail them to students' homes.
- Establish structured school- and community-based activities that give adults opportunities to be in meaningful relationships with children not their own. Foster collaboration with community mentoring programs to increase the presence of mentors in schools.

_____ Work to build school-neighborhood collaborations (such as an after-school club where students visit elderly people or shut-ins, help with errands or chores, etc.).

_____ Work with businesses to establish school-to-work and internship opportunities for students.

_____ Create school parent booster clubs, modeled after athletic booster clubs, in which parent members work to raise funds and support the school.

_____ Establish and promote active school alumni groups to foster graduates' ongoing connections with the school.

_____ Experiment with having students lead parent-teacher conferences and parent nights, to dramatically increase family participation.

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_____ Create a parent resource center with paid or volunteer staff. Identify staff who could assume responsibilities for school-home coordination, or ideally create such a position.

_____ Make school resources available after school hours to families and community members who volunteer for the school (for example, recreational facilities, computer lab).

_____ Institute activities for special audiences (for example, one school had a program specifically for fathers, to promote their involvement in education).

What families and community members can do

_____ Actively participate in developing mission statements, priorities, and goals for a school.

_____ Encourage involvement of school personnel in community prevention events or activities.

_____ Foster ongoing interaction between the school system and other agencies or resources that serve children in the community.

_____ Organize or participate in community-wide events and activities that support youth and schools, such as a citywide teacher appreciation week, youth citizenship awards, citywide teen councils, and youth representatives on boards, task forces, and study committees.

_____ Invite teachers, administrators and other school personnel to make presentations about education and prevention at civic group meetings and other forums.

_____ Include school personnel on community boards, task forces, community leadership events, retreats, and training programs.

_____ Schedule community forums to begin establishing a shared vision among various constituencies in what they want for children's futures.

_____ Create special task forces to support schools in dealing with prevention and other related education issues.

_____ Identify natural leaders in the community and mobilize them to get information about prevention and healthy development to high-risk or underserved families who do not access the media.

_____ Encourage businesses, community organizations, etc., to adopt a school and establish ongoing relationships there.

_____ Volunteer at a school.

_____ Create a system whereby police can notify school personnel when a child witnesses traumatic events, so that school personnel can respond appropriately and supportively to changes in the child's behavior.

_____ Promote ongoing dialogue to develop shared understanding about school-community collaborations. Consensus building takes time and requires patience and commitment, but it is necessary in order to earn broad-based support.

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the area where schools have control is making the most efficient and effective use of scarce resources

Leverage Funding and Resources

is necessary for providing essential components of prevention, such as training, materials, and salaries. Although money is essential, other resources are equally important to a protective school:

- people, networks, and physical resources that could be leveraged to bring about change;
- time, which may be the most precious commodity in a school;
- effective use of the resources the school does have available; and
- means of leveraging resources for prevention, including recruitment of volunteers, solicitation of in-kind donations from businesses, and resource sharing.

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Roles and Responsibilities

ALL STAFF MEMBERS actively publicize their successes and efforts, through personal networking as well as the media. These efforts increase public support for education and attract resources.

PRINCIPALS seek out resources to support all components of a protective school. They actively lobby for funding, research alternative funding sources, reallocate existing resources, and seek inexpensive ways to begin making changes.

COMMUNITY MEMBERS provide financial support for the purchase of materials and equipment, staff development, and special learning opportunities for students. They support adequate and equitable funding for education in their community. They learn about and become involved in the public education system, so they:

- have realistic expectations of the educational system,
- are more sensitive to the educational mission and concerns of schools,
- resist political forces that evaluate and indict schools on the basis of unidimensional measures such as standardized test scores,
- increase collaborative efforts with local schools to address issues of mutual concern, and
- actively seek to address inequities in the distribution of funding and resources to schools.

STATE AND FEDERAL POLITICIANS allocate funding to provide optimal, safe, drug-free learning experiences for every student.

Reaching Success

- ☐ Locate secure sources of funding to ensure continuity of core educational activities and services.
- ☐ Allocate funding to support new programs or services for three to five years, to ensure the innovation can continue long enough to achieve full implementation and adequate evaluation.
- ☐ Lobby in advance of program development and implementation to increase public support for school-based prevention activities and secure the required resources.
- ☐ Offer students and families roles that allow them to contribute to the school in many ways.
- ☐ At all levels, from the classroom to the state department of education, seek alternative and supplemental sources of funding to support innovative programs (such as sharing resources among schools, seeking donations of materials from local business leaders, and applying for grants). For example, one school has an internal mini-grant program through which faculty can apply for $1,000 to implement innovative programs or activities.
- ☐ Avoid duplication of services by creating many avenues for collaboration among people involved in similar activities, both in the school and in the community.
- ☐ Share school resources with other community organizations that have similar missions.

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Rewards!

Secure funding ensures that a continuity of programs is available to meet a range of student needs.

Secure funding allows the school community to commit to one approach long enough to see results, rather than being in constant flux as funding, and consequently programs, come and go, sometimes even before full implementation.

Tools

Some strategies for leveraging resources are:

- getting to know reporters and editors responsible for school coverage;
- lobbying for positive news coverage;
- involving students in writing press releases, sending invitations to attend school events, etc.; and
- strengthening links among schools, families, and community organizations.

For Example

Problem: A high school in a small town has a special program for students at risk of dropping out. Each year, students in this program select a service-learning project to benefit the school and community. One year they identified that neither the school nor community had adequate facilities for meetings and conferences.

Action: The principal gained permission to build a cabin on land owned by the district. Through a combination of community partnerships and class projects, the students erected the building.

Result: The cabin is used for off-site retreats and is rented out for community functions. Students in vocational and hospitality courses do the scheduling, maintenance, serving of meals, etc., as service learning and school-to-work preparation.

Resources for Leveraging Funding and Resources

Adelman, H. S. (1996). *Restructuring support services: Toward a comprehensive approach*. Kent, OH: American School Health Association.

Allensworth, D., Lawson, E., Nicholson, L., & Wyche, J. (1997). *Schools and health: Our nation's investment*. Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press.

Consortium for Policy Research on Education Web site: www.wcer.wisc.edu/cpre/finance. Address: Wisconsin Center for Education Research, University of Wisconsin–Madison, 1025 W. Johnson Street, Room 653, Madison, WI 53706. Phone: (608) 263-4260. Fax: (608) 263-6448.

Fowler, W. J. (1997). *Selected papers in school finance, 1995* (NCES Publication No. 97536). Washington, D.C.: National Center for Educational Statistics.

Odden, A., & Busch, C. (1998). *Financing schools for high performance: Strategies for improving the use of educational resources*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

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Suggestions for Leveraging Funding and Resources

Place a "✓" by the items already being implemented.
Place a "+" by three or four items you would like to improve or strengthen.

_____ Assess the public perception and level of public support for your school.

_____ Invite public officials to visit your school, participate in special events, or hold their meetings on campus.

_____ Increase public support for your school and attract funding by publicizing good things that happen at the school.

_____ Involve students in creating a school Web site, school newsletter, programs to broadcast on local public-access channels, etc., as service learning projects.

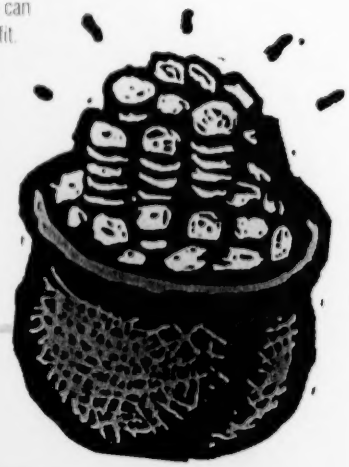
_____ Have social-service and support-service personnel make presentations at staff/faculty meetings and parent nights. They can explain what they do and how school personnel or parents could make use of them for their own and for students' benefit.

_____ Create a "School Resource Handbook" listing the resources already present in the school, to ensure school personnel are aware of and make use of them.

_____ Ensure that personnel have sufficient time and material resources to be successful (including equipment, volunteers, clerical support).

_____ Solicit volunteers to fill specific needs at the school (such as having staff from local community-based prevention programs provide training for faculty and staff).

_____ Develop multidisciplinary or transdisciplinary teams that include faculty, staff, and administrators to address individual student and system-wide concerns.



_____ Support school funding and bond issues, so schools do not have to grovel for money.

_____ Lobby for funding guidelines/mandates that better match students' needs as well as for greater school-level control over continuity and allocation of funding.

_____ Consult with innovative educators before making decisions about education expenditures.

_____ Promote per-pupil financial allocation systems over competitive funding.

_____ Provide funds, resources, and incentives for collaboration and coordination among school-based and community-based resources, in order to fill gaps in the existing service delivery system.

_____ Provide funding to support collaborative problem solving and planning among agencies and between professionals and the community.

_____ Encourage business and industry contributions to public education and prevention through tax and other incentives.

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_____ Provide financial incentives for schools who provide prevention programming.

_____ Encourage service groups to learn about unmet needs in schools and initiate projects to solve them. For example, in one town a club arranged for needy students to receive free eye exams. Another inner-city school was "adopted" by a service organization, which provided:

- a mentoring program,
- funds for mini-grants to teachers to finance innovative projects,
- members who could speak to classes on various topics,
- a representative on the school's advisory council,
- matching funds when needed for external grant applications.

_____ Lobby for realistic time frames for implementation and evaluation of programs. The average time lag from introduction to full implementation of a new program is three years.

_____ Formally evaluate the effects of consolidating and coordinating student support services, to provide a research basis for school reform efforts.

_____ Provide support and advice to schools or collaborative groups or projects that are seeking funding from public agencies.

by identifying promptly how well strategies are working, school personnel can ensure they spend money and resources only on effective interventions

Use Data to Guide Decision Making

The programs and activities in a protective school are driven by collection of data to identify needs, monitor programs, and document success:

Needs assessment ensures that planned programs match the needs of the target audience.

Monitoring ensures that programs are being implemented successfully.

Evaluation ensures that programs are addressing the needs of the school population and identifies areas where they need to be strengthened.

The U.S. Department of Education has established four Principles of Effectiveness that outline a data-driven planning process:

1. Needs assessment
2. Setting goals and objectives
3. Identifying research-based programs to meet the goals and objectives
4. Evaluation

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Roles and Responsibilities

ALL STAFF MEMBERS follow through with assigned data collection and keep consistent and accurate records.

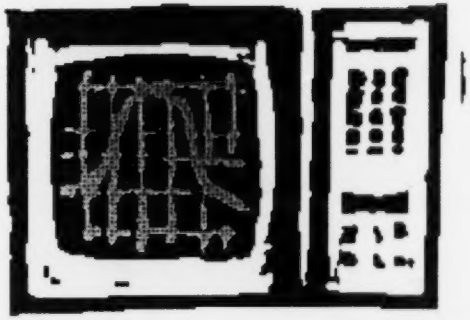
PRINCIPALS allocate resources and set up systems and expectations for data collection.

SUPERINTENDENTS AND SCHOOL BOARDS obtain school-level data and use them in district-wide management. They arrange and coordinate staff training in collection, analysis and use of data.

STUDENTS AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS volunteer time to collect and manage data.

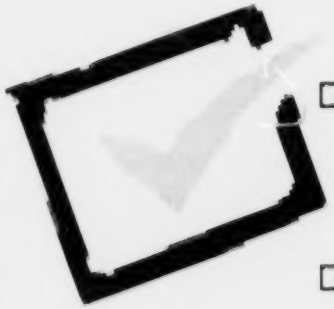
STATE AND FEDERAL POLITICIANS disseminate national data in a timely manner.

OUTSIDE CONSULTANTS design accurate and efficient data collection systems.



Reaching Success

School personnel use:



- annual surveys of the entire student body to identify the school's assets and needs;
- needs assessment to gear proposed programs to the concerns and values of the target audience—for example, by surveying students and parents about their perceived needs;
- national statistics as a comparison against local statistics to assess whether the target school district or community shows trends similar to national ones, rather than allocating scarce resources on the basis of front-page headlines;
- evaluation measures that are tightly connected to the goals of the program under evaluation, rather than generic measures of success; and
- data collected as a regular component of school business—such as rates of absences and tardies, grade point averages, discipline records, suspension rates, and student mobility—in a retrospective review of files to monitor the "health" of a school; average grades and test scores in various curriculum areas may indicate areas of relative strength and weakness academically.

The resulting information is *accurately reported* to demonstrate to the public either the success of existing efforts or the need for additional resources to expand programs. *Signs of improvement* become opportunities to celebrate successes and motivate faculty and staff to continue their efforts.

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Tools

The following sample worksheet provides a useful framework for conducting a needs assessment and using this assessment in planning. The example inserted is derived from a situation that actually occurred in a suburban middle school.[1]

	Needs Assessment			Analysis and Planning	
Number of verbal or physical altercations occurring during passing period and lunch break over a two-week period.	0 altercations occur in a two-week period.	15 verbal or physical fights requiring adult intervention occurred in two school weeks.	15 altercations in 10 school days.	• Large numbers of students trying to enter the cafeteria simultaneously. • Bottlenecks created by students simultaneously entering and exiting through a single doorway. • Frustration and boredom as hungry students wait in a long lunch line.	• Stagger lunch release times by 2 minutes per class to reduce number of students. • Unlock the fire door and use as the designated exit during lunch periods, using the main door as an entrance only. • Rearrange serving area so two lines of students can be served simultaneously. • Display student artwork in the cafeteria to create a more pleasant environment. • Ask monitors and parent volunteers to greet waiting students and encourage pleasant interaction and conversation in line.
Locations where those fights occurred.	All locations of the school are safe and free of violence.	80% of disputes occurred in or immediately outside the cafeteria during the two daily lunch periods.	Students are 4 times more likely to experience physical violence in the cafeteria than any other area of the school.		

1. The Region IV Comprehensive Center at the Appalachian Education Laboratory (AEL) has published a series of modules on consolidated planning and selection of research-based programs and strategies, entitled *Making resources matter. A systematic approach to developing the local consolidated plan* (1999). The needs assessment module focuses on processes for integrating pieces of information to identify "root causes of the identified problems, make connections, and establish priorities." For more information, contact AEL at 1-800-624-9120. The format for this table appears in AEL's newsletter, *The Link*, 18(2): 5.

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Rewards!

Through assessment, program planners can identify unmet needs and target scarce prevention dollars where the greatest need is.

Because monitoring keeps people focused on their objectives, those objectives are more likely to be achieved.

The school community gets timely feedback about what is not working, so they can fine-tune and improve their innovations.

For Example

Problem: A middle school sought to identify the most effective steps it could take to increase the educational accomplishments of its students.

Action: The *Developmental Assets Survey*[2] was administered to identify strengths in the student body. Upon reviewing the results, staff agreed that the area of educational commitment needed strengthening.

Result: Goals based on this section of the survey were incorporated into the school's improvement plan. Teachers and action teams reported at every faculty meeting on their progress toward meeting these goals. The survey will be readministered in 12 months to evaluate progress and provide a basis for needs assessment for the following year.

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Suggestions for Using Data to Guide Decision Making

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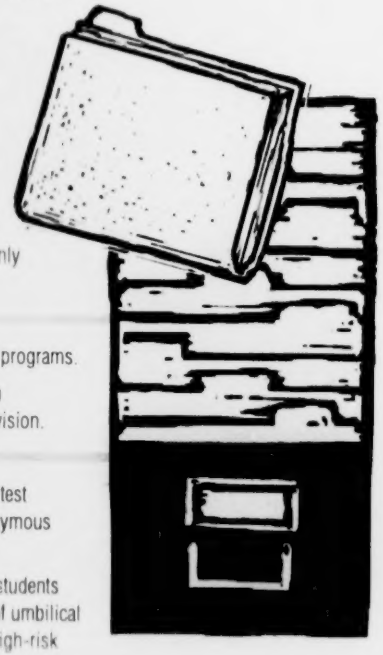
- ____ Review what assessment, monitoring, and data collection activities are currently being conducted.
- ____ Identify how data collected as a regular component of school business could be used to monitor the school climate and identify successes and problems.
- ____ As part of lessons in academic content areas, have students research school problems and design surveys or experiments to identify needs and monitor progress toward school goals.
- ____ A group of schools implementing the same program can collaborate to create Web sites, a problem-solving "hot line," opportunities to meet and share results of their ongoing monitoring, etc., in order to identify common problems and share expertise and resources.
- ____ Give faculty and staff input over the issues that affect their job lives by including them in the evaluation, assessment, and monitoring process.
- ____ Avoid punitive approaches to monitoring and use results in constructive ways to improve the school.
- ____ Develop a system to notice and publicize changes to show school personnel how they are making a difference.
- ____ Request that curriculum publishers and developers provide evaluation materials as part of their curriculum packages.
- ____ Involve stakeholders from funding agencies in the design of monitoring procedures, and keep them informed about the progress of evaluation.
- ____ Plan for ongoing data collection and assessment that requires investment of small amounts of time, rather than suddenly diverting staff to conduct a flurry of activity when required by an outside funding source.



- ____ Lobby for adequate time frames and funding for evaluation by qualified personnel as part of allocations for prevention programs.
- ____ Periodically revisit the community vision, as well as intervention and prevention programs, to reflect on what has been accomplished, identify areas where fine tuning may be needed, identify next steps, and give everyone a "recharge" of vision.

- ____ Conduct a statewide, anonymous survey of each school to develop a profile: size, socioeconomic status, standardized test scores, students' self-reported substance use and perceptions of safety, etc. These data could be used to develop anonymous controls so that school leaders can compare their school against other similar schools in the state.
- ____ Develop means of collecting longitudinal data, so administrators and policy makers can predict when large groups of students with special needs will enter the school system, and plan accordingly to meet their needs (such as random sampling of umbilical cord blood of all newborns in the state for prenatal drug exposure, distributing data on the number of premature and high-risk births in different areas, and tracking the number of children who qualify for early intervention services).

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This brochure is made possible through the generosity and concern of Lester and Roberta Smith, of Tucson, Arizona, pictured here with John L. Taylor, Dean of the College of Education, University of Arizona.

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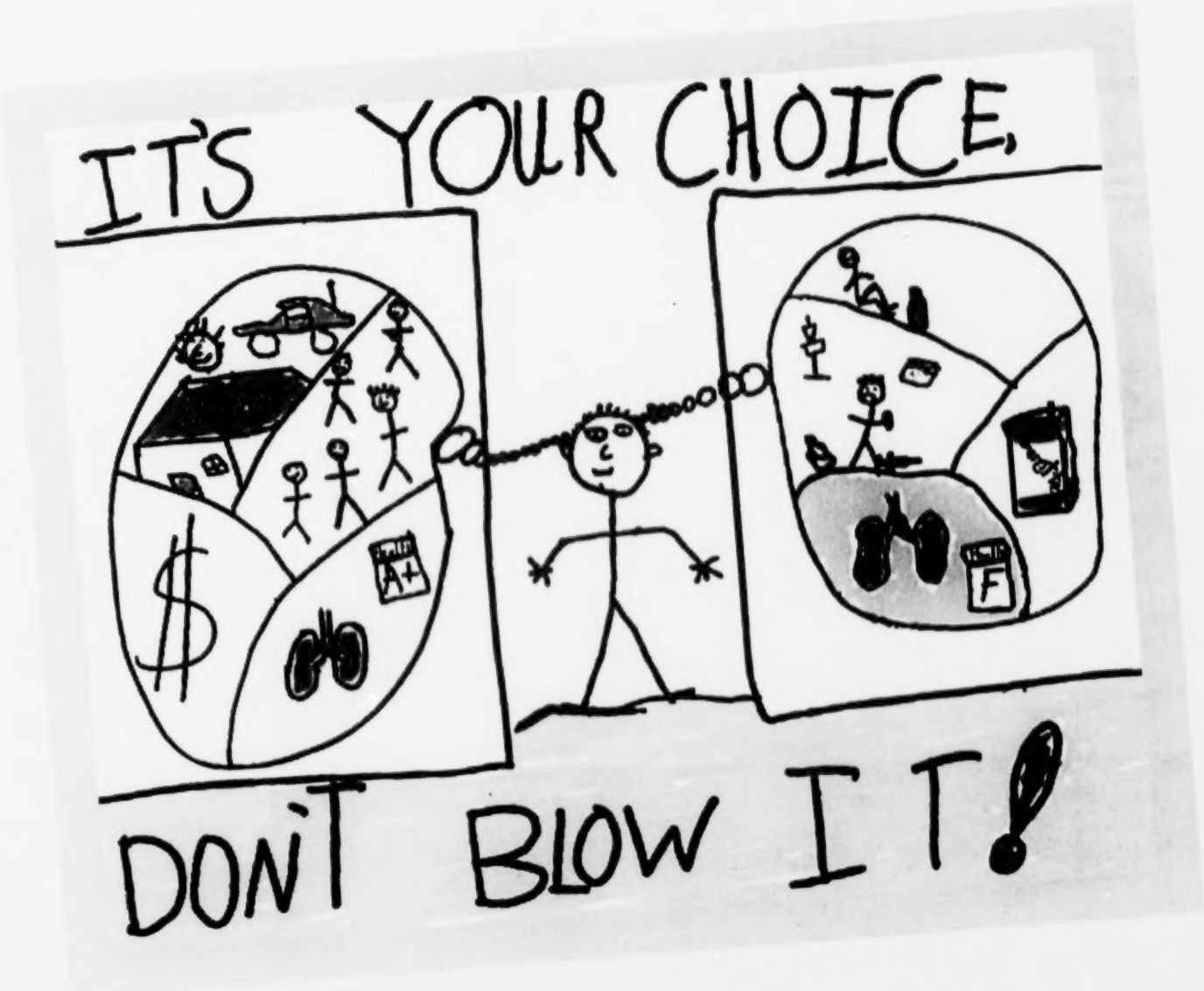
Courtesy of Marana Unified School District, Marana, Arizona: pages 15, 20, 51, 55, 57

Illustration
Drew T. Lester: page 27, back cover

Production
Kirsteen E. Anderson, Tucson, AZ, Copywriter and Editor
Karen Piovaty Design, Tucson, AZ, Graphic Design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